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J M Dilton





Taylor, Maj, Genl, U.S. Army

From an original drawing by Major [illegible]

L I F E
OF
MAJOR GENERAL
ZACHARY TAYLOR;

WITH
NOTICES OF THE WAR IN NEW MEXICO, CALIFORNIA,
AND IN SOUTHERN MEXICO;

AND
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF OFFICERS WHO HAVE
DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN THE WAR WITH MEXICO,



BY JOHN FROST, LL. D.,

AUTHOR OF "BOOK OF THE ARMY," "BOOK OF THE NAVY," &c. &c.

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TIMES of war, revolution, or other national convulsions, serve to develop strong and striking traits of character, and to bring men capable of high resolve and energetic action into public notice. The truth of this observation, confirmed by all history, has been forcibly illustrated since the commencement of hostilities between Mexico and the United States. If a long peace had led any shortsighted person to believe that the martial spirit of a free nation, like our own, could ever become extinct by inaction, the events of the last few months have served to dissipate the illusion. We find that the heroic age, the age of American chivalry, has not yet quite passed away—that we have still soldiers among us who are worthy to be ranked with the revolutionary heroes; and that the lofty spirits who

freely shed their blood at Chippewa, Niagara, Plattsburg and Fort Harrison, have lost none of that noble contempt of danger and of death which signalized their characters in the early prime of manhood.

The present war has also developed the fact that the people of this country have lost none of their ancient predilection for the sturdy race of heroes. The present popularity of General Taylor is of itself sufficient to show that the hearts of the American people are always to be won by those who display the lofty qualities of firmness, courage and capacity in battle, and heart-warm humanity towards the conquered in the hour of victory. The hearts of the people are "in the right place." They are not the mercenary, merchandizing set, which their enemies represent them to be. They reverence exalted traits of character; and cherish the true hero.

In the following pages, I have endeavored to present the character and actions of General Taylor in their true light; and for this purpose my materials have been tolerably ample, so far as regards the conspicuous actions in which he has been engaged. With respect to his private life and character, I have relied chiefly on the authority of those who are so fortunate as to possess a personal acquaintance with the General and his family. More details of the comparatively inactive parts of his life might

easily have been supplied; but most readers will be best satisfied that I have chosen to dwell chiefly on those great actions which constitute his title to renown. By his public life he will be chiefly known; and henceforward he is of course destined to be one of the most conspicuous public characters of the country.

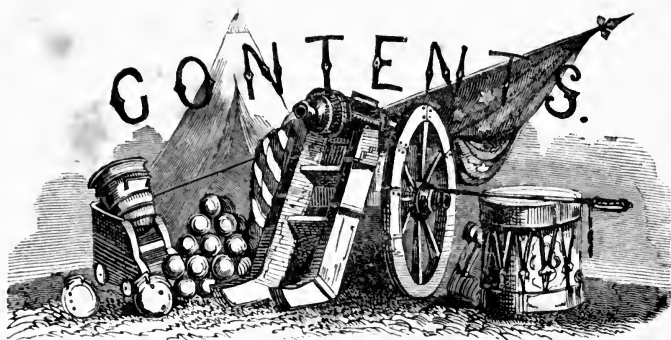
The notices of those events of the war in which General Taylor was not immediately concerned, are given in order to render the work more complete; and the biographical sketches of distinguished officers are introduced with the same view. Some materials for these sketches, having been received by me too late for insertion in the body of the work, have been thrown into the appendix.

To the President of the United States, the Secretary of War, and other official authorities at the seat of government, I am under obligations for facilities afforded me in procuring despatches, and documents, as well as to my friends Mr. James Madison Cutts, and Dr. J. F. May, of Washington, for their friendly aid in effecting the same object. I am also indebted to Mr. Moulton of New York for an abundant supply of materials relating to the battle of Buena Vista. My thanks are also due to the family of the lamented Major Vinton for the admirable portrait of General Taylor, drawn by the skilful hand which

now lies cold in the tomb. Mr. Root of Philadelphia and Mr. Van Loan of Washington, will also be pleased to accept my thanks,—the former for his excellent daguerreotype of Commodore Conner, and the latter for his spirited daguerreotypes of Lieutenant Colonel May and Brigadier General Shields. To other friends whom I am not at liberty to mention publicly, I am under still further obligations.

Like all cotemporary biography, this work is liable to error from a variety of causes which it is unnecessary to point out. I hope it will be found generally accurate ; and I shall always hold myself in readiness to correct any error which future research may discover.

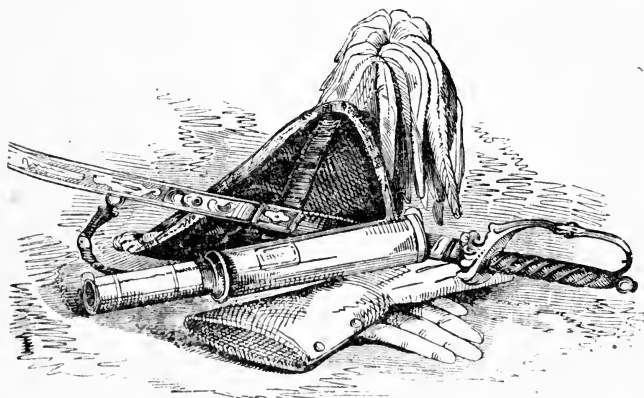


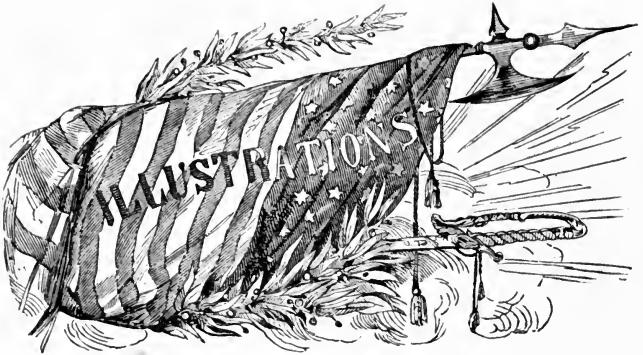


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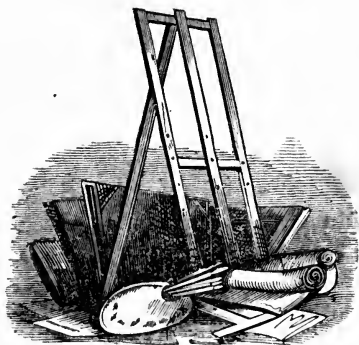
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CHAPTER I.

Early Life---Service in the War of 1812.



NEXT in importance to the interest excited by the performance of heroic deeds, is the curiosity prevalent among all classes, to learn something of the life, character, and general qualifications of the men who have shared the glories or perils of those deeds. In most cases this feeling is stronger or weaker in proportion to the approximation of the actions to our own age and country, as well as to their national importance.

If the action be the gaining of a battle, or the preservation of public honor, and it take place now, not only is the cry of exultation loud, but with it comes an imperative demand for the history of its achievers.

A prominent illustration of this principle is now before the American people. At a time when hosts of armed foes surrounded a handful of men, whose escape appeared utterly impossible, and when a whole

country was filled with dejection and anxiety for the result, one master-spirit suddenly arose, and by a series of the most rapid and brilliant strokes, retrieved his army, sustained the national honor, and won for himself immortal laurels.

The man whose career has thus burst like a meteor on the national horizon, has every eye concentrated upon him with wonder and admiration ; and with these feelings is mingled another—a desire to know something of his character and history.

The ancestors of General TAYLOR emigrated from England nearly two centuries ago, and settled in the eastern part of Virginia. His father, Richard Taylor, was born in that state, where he resided until about 1790. Zachary was his second son, and was born in November, 1784, in Orange county, Virginia ; he is therefore a native of the same state which gave birth to Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Harrison, and many other illustrious Americans. Besides Zachary, his father had four sons, Hancock, George, William, and Joseph, and three daughters, Elizabeth, Sarah, and Emily.

Richard Taylor seems to have possessed a full share of the restless spirit of active adventure which distinguished the first settlers of America. Accordingly, in a little while after Boone had explored Kentucky, we find him journeying to that wilderness. Here he was not only unappalled by the horrors of a country called by the natives the dark and bloody ground, and by his hair-breadth escapes from the Indians, but he actually formed the design of penetrating to New Orleans on foot. This he accomplished alone, through the forests and wilderness stretching along the Mississippi, and returned by ship to Virginia. When the revolution broke out, the courage and zeal which he had manifested in resisting the encroachments of the mother country, caused him to receive an appointment as colonel in the Continental army, the duties of which office he performed in a manner that fulfilled the high hopes which had been entertained of him. He fought in several of the most important battles of the north, and among others, with Washington at Trenton. At the close of the war he retired to his farm in Virginia, where he remained until about the year 1790, when he emigrated with his family to Kentucky. In this journey he was accompanied by Colonels Croghan and Bullitt, both of which names became afterwards famous

in the annals of their state. They settled upon a spot* noted for the long and peculiarly bloody wars of the Indians, and these brave men soon found an ample field in which to display their courage and hardihood. In the burnings and scalplings which happened almost weekly, Colonel Taylor so distinguished himself that he was soon looked upon as the champion of the white settlers, and the bulwark of their village. After a long time the attacks of the savages became less frequent, and the population had shaken off their fear at the Indian name, and began to assume the appearance of a regular community. Still the usefulness of Colonel Taylor did not cease with the causes which had drawn it forth. He became as distinguished a citizen as he had formerly been a soldier, and was entrusted with the duties of several very important and responsible stations. He was one of the framers of the constitution of Kentucky; represented Jefferson county and Louisville city for many years in both branches of the state legislature, and was a member of the electoral colleges which voted for Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Clay.

Such are a few points in the history of a man whose name will ever be dear to the American people, as the father of the conqueror of Mexico. All allow him to have been of unflinching perseverance, indomitable courage, and zeal and ability to perform the duties of the various offices and stations which he was called to fill.

Under the parentage of such a man it is nothing singular that young Zachary should early have imbibed a taste for military life. We are told that such was the case; and the common occurrences which daily surrounded him tended to foster this feeling. His nursery tales were stories of Indian butchery which had but recently been perpetrated upon the neighbors of his parents; and as he grew larger, he often heard the shriek of the maiden and innocent, the sharp crack of the rifle that announced their death, and then the fierce conflict between the father and his savage foe. He learned to barricade his own door, and spend the night in watchful intensity, while looking out upon nothing but gloomy forests, and some burning cottage far in the distance.

* The colonel's farm adjoined that of Colonel Croghan's father, well known as Locust Grove; and the warmest friendship existed between the two families, arising not only from ties of relationship, but from congenial feelings and habits.

At the age of six years Zachary was placed at school, under the direction of a Mr. Ayers. Even here he was in continual danger of the tomahawk, and many of the larger scholars were obliged to go armed. While here, young Zachary became distinguished among his companions for his activity, decision and bluntness of character, modesty of demeanor, and general intelligence. These are shining qualities in a school-boy, and he soon became the acknowledged and general favorite of a large portion of his comrades. From a child, his mind possessed a keen relish for military narratives, and in youth he began to long for an opportunity to display himself in the field. There still remain of him many anecdotes, all tending to illustrate his fondness for activity and adventure.

The schoolmaster of General Taylor is still living in the town of Preston, near Norwich, Connecticut, where he was born. Though more than seventy years of age, he takes great pleasure in listening to the achievements of his pupil, and in recounting anecdotes of him when a school-boy. He represents him to have been an excellent scholar, possessing an active and inquisitive mind, studious in his habits, though of sanguine temperament, quick of apprehension, and promising fair for a career of usefulness in life. He had mental qualities of thoughtfulness, judgment, shrewdness, and stability, not often found united in youth. But a peculiar trait of his character, and one not often connected with a sanguine temperament, was firmness. This, united with the above named qualities, is an important characteristic in a soldier. Upon many occasions, sudden and warm impulses, when properly directed by judgment and firmness, have produced grand achievements; and though a man may be brave to an eminent degree, yet a phlegmatic temperament is calculated to restrain the exercise of his bravery at a time when it might lead to glorious results.

Upon leaving school, young Taylor continued the exercise of those sports and labors which suited the ardor of his temperament. He often performed feats of strength and difficulty which would excite the wonder and applause of friends, and rivalry of others. His fondness for military life has been mentioned, and it is related that even before he commenced a course of rigid tactical instruction, he might often be seen with his comrades practising the different evolu-

tions of a company-drill, with as much gravity and emulation as though under orders before an enemy.

An opportunity was not long wanting for the exercise of the talent thus gradually developing. The difficulties between the United States and England, relative to interruptions of our commerce and the impressment of seamen, now presented so alarming an aspect, that an early rupture was confidently anticipated. This was an excellent opportunity for many of the wild, young spirits of the west to wreak their vengeance against an enemy, who, though respected in time of peace, was the object of bitter animosity in war. Volunteer companies were organized in every part of the Union, and the "citizen soldiery" became an object of great national importance.

While these events were in progress, the whole country was electrified by the intelligence that a British armed vessel, the *Leopard*, had fired into the American frigate *Chesapeake*, killing three of her men, wounding eighteen, and subsequently carrying away four others of her crew. This increased the popular indignation against Great Britain, as well as the spirit of determined resistance to her attacks.

Upon reception of the news of this affair, young Taylor applied for a commission in the army, and was appointed by President Jefferson a first lieutenant in the 7th regiment of infantry. This step was highly pleasing to his father, who had been instrumental in its accomplishment.

Meanwhile the difficulties between the two countries daily increased. The causes of these difficulties are generally known; but it would be well to revert to them for a few moments, in order thoroughly to understand the position of our western army, and especially the circumstances attending the defence of Fort Harrison.

England having long been the ruling maritime power of the world, made it part of her policy to watch with jealous vigilance the movements of every navy which ploughed the waters. During the war between her and the French Directory, not only was this vigilance redoubled upon the vessels of the hostile nation, but even upon neutrals. In 1793 she issued an "order in council," by virtue of which "all vessels laden wholly or in part with bread stuffs, bound to any port in France, or places occupied by French armies, were

required to be carried into England, and their cargoes either there disposed of, or security given that they should be sold only in the ports of a country in amity with Great Britain." The same year another order was issued, directing "all vessels laden with goods, the produce of any colony of France, or carrying provisions or supplies for such colony, to be seized and brought in for adjudication." At the same time she claimed the right to muster the crews of all neutral vessels, and take from them for her own use any sailors who had been born in England, or who were believed to have been born there. This was called impressment, and under its sanction hundreds of American citizens were forced into the British navy as English sailors. In 1806 England declared the whole sea-coast bordering on the British Channel in a state of blockade, and in November of the same year, that "all the ports and places of France, her allies, or any other country at war with England, or from which the British flag was excluded, and all their colonies, to be in a state of blockade; and all commerce in articles the produce or manufacture of such countries to be unlawful." The result of these proceedings was the war of 1812.

The commencement of hostilities found the Americans but ill prepared for a successful struggle, and perhaps no part of their vast area was more defenceless than the Northwestern territory. The settlements were thin and widely separated, and from the extent of ground even a large army could not act so as to protect and cover all. The Indians east of the Mississippi numbered 100,000, mostly hostile to the United States, and from that number, at least 10,000 warriors could be mustered. These were connected with the vast hordes west of that river, and with about one-third of their number who resided in Canada. With almost all these tribes the British had formed treaties of friendship, and had established stations in different parts of their territory, from which they were supplied with ammunition and military stores. Their great chief, Tecumseh, had long been perfecting a scheme by which he hoped to unite all the Indians from the great lakes to the gulf, in one confederation, whose efforts were to be directed against the western settlers. Besides all this, the proximity to the British settlements of Canada and New Britain afforded the enemy every facility for precipitating

their troops upon a frontier where they would meet with scarcely a tenable fort.

With a view to defend this territory, and excite, if possible, the Canadians to revolt, William Hull, governor of the Michigan territory, was appointed a brigadier general, with the command of the forces to operate on Canada. He joined the army at Detroit, and on the 12th of July, 1812, made a descent upon Canada. Upon his entrance into that province, he published a proclamation, inviting all the inhabitants to leave the British standard, and denouncing heavy penalties to all those who should either oppose his progress or join the Indians. This invitation was attended with considerable success; but while his allies were looking for some active operations, the general suddenly recrossed the river to Detroit. Here he was soon afterward attacked by General Brock, governor of Canada, and to the utter astonishment of his whole army, surrendered the entire command into the hands of his antagonist.

The loss of the whole northwestern army, the fortress of Detroit, and the military posts of that region, together with the whole territory of Michigan within sixty days after the declaration of war, was a subject of universal astonishment and alarm. In consequence of it, the great body of Indians, ever ready to join the successful party, flocked to the British standard, prepared to renew their ravages with increased severity. The state of Ohio, and the region now forming Indiana and Illinois became dangerously exposed. Large numbers of Indians were contained within their borders, who, in connection with those without, would now be induced to join the enemy. Had the army under General Hull been successful, and the British depot at Malden broken up, the savages, deprived of their supplies, would have been obliged to remain neutral, or have been awed into submission.

The alarm occasioned by this disaster did not, however, hinder the Americans from adopting measures to retrieve it. Volunteers flocked to the standard of their country in great numbers, burning with zeal to revenge its disgrace. Aided by the indefatigable exertions of the governors of the territories, their army soon amounted to eight thousand men, who were placed under the command of General Harrison, governor of Indiana, and a brigadier in the

United States service, in whose talents and experience the western country had the most perfect confidence. Their object was to subdue the Indians of the west, and to recover what had been lost at Detroit.

Such was the origin of the war of 1812, and its commencement in the Northwestern territory. At the very first stroke the American loss was heavy, and to reinspire that confidence in the efficiency of their arms, which the nation had ever felt, it became necessary for every leading officer, however small his command, to act with consummate prudence and bravery. Small forts were scattered around in various directions, and the defence of these was entrusted only to those in whom General Harrison had the most perfect confidence. One of these was a small and weak stockade fort, called in honor of the commanding general, Fort Harrison. It was situated on the Wabash river, in Indiana, the very heart of the Indian country, and had for some time been threatened by the Miami and other large tribes. The selection of a commander for this station was a subject of considerable importance, but it at length devolved upon Captain Taylor. In this appointment the general was no doubt influenced by the success of Taylor in his many previous skirmishes with the Indians, for which he had been advanced from the rank of lieutenant to that of captain. This was under Governor Shelby, previous to the commencement of hostilities with Great Britain,

Upon assuming the command of Fort Harrison, Taylor not only found the works in a miserable condition, but also that of the small garrison of fifty men, all excepting about twenty were disabled by sickness. Notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, he set himself earnestly to work in order to render the fort defensible. The principal defences consisted of an upper and lower blockhouse, and a fort with two bastions. These he strengthened by other small fortifications, and especially by judicious arrangements of his fire arms, and took every measure to supply his men with ample provisions of food and ammunition, and to inspire them with confidence in themselves.

The first indications of an attack were manifested on Thursday, the 3d of September. A delegation from the Miami Indians then informed the captain that the "Prophet," brother of Tecumseh, was advancing with his party toward the fort, and that the Miamis were

about to retire from that region. On the same evening two young citizens were making hay at the distance of about four hundred yards from the fort. Soon after retreat beating, four guns were heard in that direction, and the garrison were immediately impressed with the belief that the men had been surprised and murdered by the Indians. On account of the lateness of the hour it was not thought prudent to search for them then, and their non-appearance after a long and anxious watch convinced the captain that his suspicions of their fate were correct. Nothing further transpired that night, and the next morning at eight o'clock a corporal with a small party was detached to investigate the result of the firing, if it could be done without too much risk of being drawn into an ambuscade. The corporal soon sent a messenger back to the fort, informing the commander that he had found the two dead bodies, and requesting further orders. A cart and oxen were sent out, and the murdered men brought to the fort. Each had been shot with two balls, scalped, and horribly mangled. They were buried within the fort. This circumstance caused the garrison to redouble their vigilance. Additional sentinels were posted, and the officers of the guard directed to walk the round all night, in order to prevent, if possible, a surprise.

Late on the evening of the 4th, an old man named Joseph Lenar, with between thirty and forty Indians, arrived from the Prophet's town with a white flag. Among these were ten women, and the men were the chiefs from the different tribes composing the Prophet's party. The object of this mission, as stated by a Shawnee who spoke English, was to obtain another interview on the following morning, and to buy provisions. There could be no doubt, however, that their true object was to spy the strength of the garrison, and throw them off their guard. Accordingly, after retreat beating, the men's arms were examined, and their cartridges completed to sixteen rounds per man. So miserable, however, was the health of the soldiers, that the captain despaired of a successful defence in case of an attack from a large force—even his small guard of six privates and two non-commissioned officers were not able to do service every day.

Soon after the departure of the Indians the captain was obliged to retire to rest in consequence of debility from a late violent attack

of fever. His sleep was short. Before retiring he had cautioned the guard to be vigilant, and take every precaution to prevent surprise, and at eleven o'clock he was awakened by a shot from one of the sentinels. He immediately arose, and ordered each man to his post. At this moment the orderly sergeant having charge of the upper blockhouse, called out that a body of Indians had fired the lower one. Under cover of the night they had accomplished this, unseen by the garrison, and they now opened a pretty active fire, which was returned by the Americans. The cry of *fire* threw the whole fort into confusion; the soldiers gave up all for lost, when they saw the flames communicate with a quantity of whisky in the blockhouse, and rush up in wide sheets toward the barracks, which made part of the fortifications. Some women and children who were in the fort ran among the garrison, imploring for succor, and filling the air with their lamentations. This, with the howlings of hundreds of Indians, rendered that night-scene one sufficient to appal the stoutest heart. But amid all this uproar one man remained cool and determined,—that man was the young commander of the fort, and to his self-possession was owing the safety of the garrison. Immediately on perceiving the flames, he ordered water to be brought from the well in buckets, but in consequence of debility and the influence of terror upon the soldiers, these orders were but languidly executed. He then informed the men that their only means of safety was to keep the end of the fortification nearest the blockhouse continually wet, that by so doing not only might the whole row of buildings be saved, but an opening of only eighteen or twenty feet left for the Indians to enter after the house was consumed, and, that even here their entrance might be prevented by the erection of a temporary breastwork. The chance of escape from imminent danger inspired the men with a firmness bordering on desperation. Under the direction of Dr. Clark those who were able, mounted the tops of the houses amid a shower of balls, and in a very short time had thrown off the greater part of the roof nearest to the burning building. This was done with the loss of but one man killed and two wounded. During this time two of the men leaped from the pickets and ran toward the enemy. Their cowardice was but ill rewarded,—one of them was killed, and the other returned before



Defence of Fort Harrison.

day to the gate, where he begged "for God's sake" to be admitted. Not being recognized, his attempt was supposed to be a stratagem of the Indians to gain admittance into the fort, and he was fired upon. The shot not taking effect, he ran round to the other bastion where his voice was recognized, and he was directed by Dr. Clark to lie down close to the pickets behind an empty barrel. He there remained until daylight, when he was admitted. His arm was broken in a shocking manner, and he was otherwise greatly mangled.

While a part of the garrison were thus demolishing the roof, the men below were using every exertion to prevent the destruction of the barracks. They were several times on fire, and extinguished only by the most active efforts. During the whole time, and while laboring at their breastwork, the men were exposed to a heavy fire from the Indians, as well as to a shower of arrows which rained around them in great quantities. Before morning the work was advanced to the height of a man, with the loss of but one soldier killed.

The approach of daylight enabled the Americans to aim with more precision and success, and at six o'clock their fire had become so destructive as to cause the Indians to remove from the reach of their guns. At this disappointment of their expected booty, the savages became furious; and driving up the horses and a number of hogs belonging to the citizens, they shot them in front of the fort. They also seized all the cattle belonging to private individuals, amounting to sixty-five head, together with the oxen, which were public property.

As the enemy continued in sight that day, the American commander was busily occupied in repairing the damages of the fort. The vacancy caused by the burning of the blockhouse was filled up by a strong row of pickets, obtained by demolishing the guard house. The other defences were also strengthened, and provision made against a second attempt to fire the buildings.

The Indians, however, had been so severely handled that they did not consider it advisable to renew the attack. They continued within sight until the morning of the 6th, when the garrison were relieved of their presence. The loss of the Indians had been heavy, but as they were very numerous, each dead body was carried from the field. Notwithstanding the apparent friendliness of the Miamis

on the evening of the assault, there is little doubt but that the whole of their tribe was among the Prophet's party.

After the attack the garrison were obliged to subsist upon a scanty supply of green corn, all their provisions having been intercepted or destroyed by the enemy. Captain Taylor used great exertions to forward despatches to General Harrison, but as every road was guarded by strong parties of Indians, his messengers were obliged to return. The following letter will convey some idea of the difficulties under which he labored.

“Fort Harrison, Sept. 13th, 1812.

“DEAR SIR:—I wrote to you on the 10th instant, giving you an account of an attack on this place, as well as my situation, which account I attempted to send by water; but the two men whom I despatched in a canoe after night found the river so well guarded that they were obliged to return. The Indians had built a fire on the bank of the river a short distance below the garrison, which gave them an opportunity of seeing any craft that might attempt to pass, and were waiting with a canoe ready to intercept it. I expect the fort as well as the road to Vincennes is as well or better watched than the river. But my situation compels me to make one other attempt by land, and my orderly sergeant and one other man set out to-night, with strict orders to avoid the road in the day-time, and depend entirely on the woods, although neither of them have ever been in Vincennes by land, nor do they know any thing of the country; but I am in hopes that they will reach you in safety. I send them with great reluctance, from their ignorance of the woods. I think it very probable there is a large party of Indians waylaying the road between this and Vincennes, likely about the Narrows, for the purpose of intercepting any party that may be coming to this place, as the cattle they got here will supply them plentifully with provisions for some time to come.

Please, &c.,

“His excellency, Governor Harrison.”

Z. TAYLOR.”

At the time of the writing of this letter Colonel Russell was within fifteen miles of Fort Harrison, with a reinforcement of six hundred mounted rangers, and five hundred infantry. He arrived on the 16th, to the utter surprise of Captain Taylor, who had not heard

of even his approach. Some time after the garrison was further reinforced by about 4000 men under Major General Hopkins.

On the 11th of November the army left Fort Harrison on an expedition to the Prophet's town, which they reached on the 19th. They destroyed the town, which consisted of about forty huts, and the Kickapoo village of one hundred and sixty, together with all the standing corn. They also reconnoitered the surrounding country, and constructed several works of defence. In every operation Captain Taylor took an efficient part, and we find him mentioned in the despatches of Hopkins as an officer who had rendered "prompt and effectual support in every instance."

On his return from this expedition Taylor found a package for him from the seat of government. This, on being opened, was discovered to contain a commission from President Madison, conferring on him the rank of brevet major, as a reward for his gallant defence of Fort Harrison, of which it bore the date. This is said to have been the first brevet ever conferred in the American army.

Major Taylor continued actively engaged in the war of 1812 until its close, although in consequence of his not being entrusted with any other separate command it is difficult to trace his progress. The skill and bravery, however, which he displayed in the defence of Fort Harrison, inspired both his comrades and the country with confidence in his superior abilities as an officer; and indeed such a defence under the trying difficulties of desertion, conflagration, and a savage foe, to whose numbers his own were but a handful, was sufficient to establish his reputation as a soldier of sterling qualities.*

* Early in life General Taylor married a lady of Virginia, whose family emigrated to Kentucky, and who was some relation to his father. The general is related either by marriage or blood to many of the noblest families of America—Preston, Gaines, Clay, Pendleton, Monroe, and others. He has had five children, one of which died in early life. The eldest daughter is the lady of Dr. Ward, a surgeon of high standing in the army. The second, Sarah Knox, called after General Knox, and always known by her second name, married Lieutenant Jefferson Davis, now a brigadier, and late member of Congress from Mississippi. She was extremely accomplished, both in person and education, but survived her marriage only a few months. Elizabeth, (known only as "Betty Taylor,") was educated at Madame Grelaud's, in Philadelphia, and is now with her mother at Baton Rouge. Richard, the only son, about twenty-four years old, was many years at Cambridge, but is now also at Baton Rouge.



CHAPTER II.

Service in the Florida War. Battle of Okeechobee.



AFTER the treaty of Ghent, in 1815, Major Taylor remained in the West for several years, moving from one post to another, as the interest of the service called him. In 1832, he was promoted to the rank of colonel; and in an early stage of the war in Florida he was ordered to that country.

This war is remarkable for its obstinacy, and the singular manner in which it was conducted. The man who had become a veteran in

open battle, when he entered Florida was obliged, to a certain extent, to learn an entirely new course of tactics. The Indians concealed themselves within dense swamps, where it was impossible for an army to follow them; and from these they sallied at night, in order to cut up small parties, and devastate the country. The extent of these swamps scattered the operations over so large a space, that it was impossible for an army to defend the country with any degree of efficiency. In a short time the war became unpopular with the soldiers themselves, who were exposed to every

danger, without the power of properly defending themselves ; and the command of the army in Florida, became a phrase, whose meaning was a concentration of difficulty and peril.

In this war few officers distinguished themselves more than Colonel Taylor. He was continually in active service, and won for himself the esteem of both officers and soldiers. But his greatest achievement, and that for which he is principally remembered in connection with Florida, was the battle of Okee-Chobee.

This battle was fought on the 25th of December, 1837, between the Americans, under Colonel Taylor, and the Seminoles and Mickasukies, commanded by their chiefs, Alligator and Sam Jones. The United States army had now been in the Florida service for two years, and the colonel commanded the first brigade, stationed at Fort Gardner, south of the Withlacoochee. On the 19th of December he received a communication from Major-General Jesup, informing him that all hopes of bringing the war to a close by negotiation through the interference or mediation of the Cherokee delegation, were at an end, and that Sam Jones, with the Mickasukies, had determined to "fight to the last." It also directed him to proceed with the least possible delay, against any portion of the enemy he might hear of, and to destroy or capture them.

The next morning after receiving this communication, the colonel left an adequate force under two officers, to protect the depot, and marched with the remainder of his command, having with him but twelve days' rations, his means of transportation not enabling him to carry more. His force was composed of Captain Morris's company of the fourth artillery, consisting of thirty-five men ; the first infantry, under Colonel Davenport,* one hundred and ninety-seven strong ; the fourth infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Foster, two hundred and seventy-four ; the Missouri volunteers, one hundred and eighty ; Morgan's spies, forty-seven ; and thirty pioneers, thirteen pontoniers, and seventy Delaware Indians ; making in all, exclusive of officers, one thousand and thirty-two men. The greater part of the Shawnees had been detached, and the remainder refused to accompany him, under pretext that many of them were sick, and the rest without moccasins.



THE army moved down the west side of the Kissimmee, in a southern course, towards Lake Istopoga. The colonel was induced to take this route for several reasons. He had learned that a portion of the enemy were in that direction, and imagined that if General Jesup should fall in with the Mickasukies and drive them before him, they might attempt to escape by crossing the Kissimmee, from the east to the west side of the peninsula, between Fort Gardner and its entrance into Okee-Chobee, in which case he

might be near at hand to intercept them. He also wished to overawe such of the Indians as had been making propositions to give themselves up, but had been slow to fulfil their promise ; to erect block-houses and a small picket work on the Kissimmee, forty or fifty miles below the fort, for a third depot. By this means he hoped to obtain a knowledge of the country, as he had no guide to rely on, and also to open a communication with Colonel Smith, who was operating by his orders, up the Caloosehatchee or Sanybel river.

In the evening of his first day's march, Colonel Taylor met the Indian Chief Jumper, with his family and a part of his band, consisting of fifteen men, some of them with families and a few negroes, on his way to deliver himself up in conformity to a previous arrangement with the Colonel. The whole consisted of sixty three persons, and were conducted by Captain Parks, a half breed at the head of the friendly Indians, both Shawnees and Delawares. The army encamped that night near the spot, and the next morning having sent on Jumper and his party to Fort Frazer, the Colonel continued his march, at the same time sending forward three Seminoles to gain intelligence concerning the position of the enemy. About noon of the same day he sent forward one battalion of Gentry's regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Price, who was ordered "to pick up any stragglers that might fall in his way ; to encamp two

or three miles in advance of the main force ; to act with great circumspection, and to communicate promptly any occurrence of importance that might take place in his vicinity."

About ten o'clock in the morning, Taylor received a note from Colonel Price, stating that the three Seminoles sent forward in the morning had returned ; that they had been near where Alligator had encamped, twelve or fifteen miles in advance of his present position ; that Alligator had left there with a part of his family four days before, under pretext of separating his friends and relatives from the Mickasukies, preparatory to his surrendering with them ; that there were several families remaining at the camp referred to, who wished to give themselves up, and would remain there until Colonel Taylor took possession of them, but who were in great danger of being carried away that night by the Mickasukies, who were encamped at no great distance from them.

In consequence of this intelligence Colonel Taylor put himself at the head of his mounted men a little after midnight, and after directing Lieutenant Colonel Davenport to follow him early in the morning, he commenced his march, joined Price, crossed Istopoga outlet, and soon after daylight took position at the encampment referred to, and had the satisfaction to find that the inmates, amounting in all to twenty-two individuals, had not been disturbed. One of their number informed him that Alligator was anxious to deliver himself up ; and this individual, who was an old man, was subsequently employed on a mission to inform the chief, that if sincere in his professions he should have a conference next day at a place designated on the Kissimmee.

Upon the arrival of Colonel Davenport with the infantry, Colonel Taylor moved on to the place of meeting with Alligator, near which, as he reached it late in the evening, he encamped. At eleven o'clock the old Indian returned, bringing a very equivocal message from Alligator, whom, according to his report, he met accidentally. He also stated that the Mickasukies were still encamped on the opposite side of the river, where they had remained for some days, with a determination to fight the United States troops. In this humor the Colonel determined to indulge them as soon as possible. Accordingly, the next morning he took the old Indian for his guide, crossed

the Kissimmee, and reached Alligator's encampment, which was situated on the edge of "Cabbage Tree Hammock," in the midst of a large prairie. From the appearance of this and other encampments in the vicinity, together with the many evidences of slaughtered cattle, it was evident that the population must have numbered several hundreds.

Before Taylor commenced this march he had laid out a small stockade fort for the protection of a future depot, and left the pioneers, pontoniers, eighty-five sick and disabled infantry, and a portion of the friendly Indians, together with all his artillery and heavy baggage, under the protection of Captain Monroe. This enabled him to move much faster than if encumbered by wounded and baggage, and brought him nearly on a level with his wary enemy.

Soon after the arrival, the spies surprised another encampment situated at a small distance from the first, in the midst of a swamp. It contained a small party of young men, one old one, and some women and children, who raised a white flag and were taken prisoners. They were Seminoles, and informed Colonel Taylor that the Mickasukies, headed by A-vi-a-ka (Sam Jones) were at the distance of about twelve miles, securely encamped in a swamp, and prepared to fight. Upon receiving this information the commander dismissed the old man, and after making provision for those who came in, moved forward under guidance of the Seminoles, toward the camp of the Mickasukies.

Between the hours of two and three in the afternoon, the army reached a very dense cypress swamp, through which they passed with great difficulty, and under continual apprehension of an attack from a concealed foe. The necessary dispositions for battle were arranged at the same time; but the soldiers crossed without gaining sight of the enemy, and encamped for the night on the opposite side. During the passage of the rear, Captain Parks, who was in advance with a few friendly Indians, encountered two of the enemy's spies, and succeeded in capturing one of them who was on foot. He was a young warrior of great activity, armed with an excellent rifle, fifty balls in his pouch, and an adequate proportion of powder. This Indian confirmed the information previously received from other prisoners, and in addition, stated that a large body of Seminoles, headed

by John Cohua, Coacoochee, Alligator, and other chiefs, was encamped five or six miles from the Americans, near the Mickasukies, the latter being separated by a cypress swamp and a dense hammock.

The army moved forward at daylight the next morning, and after marching five or six miles reached another cypress swamp, on the borders of which was a deserted camp of the Seminoles. It had evidently contained several hundred persons, and exhibited very plain manifestations of having been abandoned in a hurry, as several fires were still burning, and quantities of beef lying on the ground unconsumed.

Upon reaching this encampment the troops were again arranged in order of battle, and again disappointed in their expectation of seeing an enemy. After remaining for some time, they crossed the swamp and entered a large prairie in their front, on which two or three hundred cattle, and a number of Indian ponies were grazing. Here was captured another young warrior, armed and equipped like the former. He pointed to a dense hammock on the right, about a mile distant, in which he said the Indians were situated, and waiting to give battle.

In this place the final disposition was made for an attack. The army was drawn up in two lines; Morgan's spies and the volunteers under Gentry, in extended order, formed the first line, with instructions to enter the hammock, and if attacked and hard pressed, to fall back in the rear of the regular troops, out of reach of the enemy's fire; the second line was composed of the fourth and sixth infantry, who were instructed to sustain the volunteers. The first infantry was held in reserve.

These arrangements being completed, the whole force moved on in the direction of the hammock, and after proceeding about a quarter of a mile reached the swamp, on the opposite side of which the enemy were stationed. This was three-quarters of a mile wide, extending on the left as far as the eye could reach, and on the right to a part of the swamp and hammock they had just crossed, through which ran a deep creek. It consisted of an oozy mass of mud and water nearly two feet deep, over which waved a thick growth of coarse "saw-grass," as tall as a man, and was utterly impassable to

cavalry, and nearly so to foot. In consequence of this, all the men were dismounted at the edge of the swamp, and the horses and baggage left under a suitable guard. At the same time Captain Allen was detached with the two companies of mounted infantry to examine the swamp and hammock to the right; and in case of not finding the enemy in that direction, to return to the baggage; but in either case if he heard a heavy firing, immediately to join Colonel Taylor.

These arrangements being satisfactorily completed, the army crossed the swamp in order of battle. The volunteers and spies had scarcely reached the borders of the swamp, when a heavy fire was opened upon them by a large body of Indians. This was returned for a short time with considerable spirit, but they soon lost their gallant commander, Colonel Gentry, who fell mortally wounded. After this misfortune they fled in disorder, and instead of forming in the rear of the regulars, as had been directed, they retired across the swamp, to their baggage and horses; nor would they again enter into action as a body, although efforts were made by Colonel Taylor's staff to induce them to do so. At this success, the Indians rushed forward upon the second line, at the same time discharging a heavy fire of musketry. They were, however, coolly met and driven back by the fourth and sixth infantry. The heat of battle was principally borne by five companies of the latter; yet they not only sustained it firmly, but continued to advance until their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson and his adjutant, Lieutenant Carter, were killed; they were then obliged to retire for a short distance, and reform. So great had been the loss of these companies, that every officer, with a single exception, together with most of the non-commissioned, including the sergeant-major and four of the orderly sergeants, was killed or wounded; and one of them had but *four* members uninjured.

Lieutenant-Colonel Foster, with six companies, amounting in all to one hundred and sixty men, gained the hammock in good order, where he was joined by Captain Noel, with the two remaining companies of the sixth infantry, and Captain Gillam, of Gentry's volunteers, with a few additional men. These, by a change of front, succeeded in separating the enemy's line, and continued to drive them until they reached the Lake Okee-Chobee, which was



Battle of Okechobee

in the rear of the enemy's position, and bordered their encampment for nearly a mile. As soon as Colonel Taylor was informed that Captain Allen was advancing, he ordered the first infantry to move to the left, gain the enemy's right flank and turn it. This order was executed with promptness and effect; as soon as the regiment got into position the Indians gave one fire and retreated, being pursued by the first, fourth, and sixth, and some few volunteers, until near night. This chase was a most fatiguing one, as the enemy scattered in all directions, and the troops were obliged to follow over a swampy and rugged surface.

This action was long and severe, continuing from half past twelve until about three, P. M. The Indians had selected the strongest position of the swamp, and were covered in front by a small stream, whose quicksands rendered it almost impassable. In addition to this, their front was concealed and partly protected by a growth of thickly interwoven hammock, and their flanks were secured by impassable swamps. They numbered about seven hundred warriors, and were led by Alligator, Coacoochee, and Sam Jones.

Colonel Taylor's force amounted to about five hundred men, only part of whom were regulars. In passing the stream they sunk to the middle in mire, and were continually exposed to the fire of the enemy; and for a while during the battle, both parties fought hand to hand. The Americans lost twenty-six killed, and one hundred and twelve wounded. Among the slain were Colonels Gentry and Thompson, Captain Van Swearingen, and Lieutenants Carter and Brook, all of whom fell at the head of their respective commands. The loss of the Indians was never ascertained; they left ten bodies on the field, and doubtless carried away a large number, according to their invariable practice. During the whole engagement the Colonel was on horseback, passing from point to point, and cheering his men, though he himself was exposed to the complete range of the Indian rifles.

As soon as the enemy were thoroughly broken, Colonel Taylor turned his attention to the wounded. He had previously ordered an encampment to be formed near his baggage; and to facilitate his operations, he directed Captain Taylor to cross to that spot and employ every individual whom he might find there, in constructing

a small footway across the swamp. By great exertions this was completed a short time after dark, when all the dead and wounded, with the exception of the body of a private, which could not be found, were carried across in litters.

In speaking of this disastrous though successful action, Colonel Taylor, in his official communication to the department, says:—"I trust that I may be permitted to say, that I experienced one of the most trying scenes of my life, and he who could have looked on it with indifference, his nerves must have been very differently organized from my own. Besides the killed there lay one hundred and twelve wounded, officers and soldiers, who had accompanied me one hundred and forty-five miles, most of the way through an unexplored wilderness, without guides, who had so gallantly beat the enemy, under my orders, in his strongest position, and who had to be conveyed back through swamps and hammocks, from whence we set out, without any apparent means of doing it. This service, however, was encountered and overcome, and they have been conveyed thus far, and proceeded on to Tampa Bay, on rude litters, constructed with the axe and knife alone, with poles and dry hides; the latter being found in great abundance at the encampment of the hostiles. The litters were conveyed on the backs of our weak and tottering horses, aided by the residue of the command, with more ease and comfort to the sufferers than I could have supposed; and with as much as they could have been in ambulances of the most improved and modern construction."

The day after the battle Colonel Taylor and his command remained at their encampment, occupied in taking care of the wounded, and in the sad office of interring the dead. They also prepared litters for the removal of the wounded, and detached a portion of the mounted men to collect the horses and cattle which had been left by the enemy. Of the former they found about a hundred, many of which were saddled, and three hundred oxen.

On the morning of the 27th, Colonel Taylor left the encampment, and at about noon next day reached the post on the Kissimmee, where he had left his heavy baggage. Finding the stockade which he had ordered Captain Monroe to construct, nearly in a state of completion, he left two companies and a few Indians to garrison it,

and proceeded towards Fort Gardner. Arriving here he sent on the wounded to Tampa Bay, with the fourth and sixth infantry; the former to halt at Fort Frazer. He himself remained at Fort Gardner with the first, in order to make preparations to retake the field, designing to do so as soon as his horses could be recruited, and his supplies in a sufficient state of forwardness to justify that measure.

In his despatch, the Colonel speaks in high terms of the behavior of the regulars, especially of the sixth infantry, and designates particular actions of the following officers, most of whom had been engaged with him in the campaigns of Florida, and some have since been known in a more conspicuous theatre of action—Lieutenant-Colonel Davenport, Colonel Foster, Major Graham, Captain Allen, Lieutenant Hooper, Captain Noel, Lieutenant Wood, Captain Andrews, Lieutenant Walker, Colonel Gentry, Captain Gillam, Lieutenant Blakely, Captain Childs, Lieutenants Rogers, Flanagan, Hase, Gorden, Hill, Griffin, Harrison, McClure, Major Sconce, Captain Taylor, Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson, Captain Swearingen, Adjutant Carter, Lieutenant Brook, Major Brant, and Lieutenant Babbitt. His remarks upon Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson deserve remembrance, as displaying a tenderness of heart and warmth of friendship, which enhances the merit of all his military performances :—

“ It is due to his rank and talents, as well as to his long and important services, that I particularly mention Lieutenant-Colonel A. R. Thompson, of the sixth infantry, who fell in the discharge of his duty at the head of his regiment. He was in feeble health, brought on by exposure to this climate during the past summer, refusing to leave the country while his regiment continued in it. Although he received two balls from the fire of the enemy early in the action, which wounded him severely, yet he appeared to disregard them, and continued to give his orders with the same coolness that he would have done had his regiment been under review, or on any parade duty. Advancing he received a third ball, which at once deprived him of life; his last words were—‘Keep steady men, charge the hammock—remember the regiment to which you belong.’ I had known Colonel Thompson personally only for a short time, and the more I knew of him, the more I wished to know; and had

his life been spared, our acquaintance, no doubt, would have ripened into the closest friendship. Under such circumstances, there are few, if any other than his bereaved wife, mother and sisters, who more deeply and sincerely lament his loss, or who will longer cherish his memory, than myself."

The battle of Okee-Chobee had a very beneficial influence upon the efforts to subdue the Indians of Florida. An officer writing from Fort Bassinger subsequent to it, says: "The Indian prisoners now admit that they lost twenty killed on the ground, and a great many wounded, in the fight with Colonel Taylor. They had a strong position and fought well, but were terribly whipped, and have never returned near the ground since. Jumper, Alligator, and other warriors afterwards came in, and were subsequently employed by the Colonel in inducing their hostile companions to surrender themselves; by this means large numbers delivered themselves to the Americans. Indeed the general policy pursued by Colonel Taylor while in Florida, together with his industry and perseverance, and the hardy constitution he possessed, rendered his services immensely valuable to the government in subduing the savages and giving peace and safety to the southern frontier. The country was not insensible of his value, and the department at Washington conferred on him the rank of Brigadier-General by brevet, to take date from the battle of Okee-Chobee.

Taylor now established himself at Fort Bassinger, on the Kissimmee, about twenty miles west of Fort Lloyd. On the first of March following, Mr. Poinsett, Secretary of War, wrote to Major-General Jesup a letter, of which the following is an extract:

"The department indulge the hope, that with the extensive means placed at your disposal, the war by a vigorous effort might be brought to a close this campaign. If, however, you are of opinion that from the nature of the country, and the character of the enemy, such a result is impracticable, and that it is advisable to make a temporary arrangement with the Seminoles, by which the safety of the settlements and the posts will be secured throughout the summer, you are at liberty to do so. In that event you will establish posts at Tampa, and on the eastern shore, and wherever else they are, in your opinion, necessary to preserve the peace of the country; and

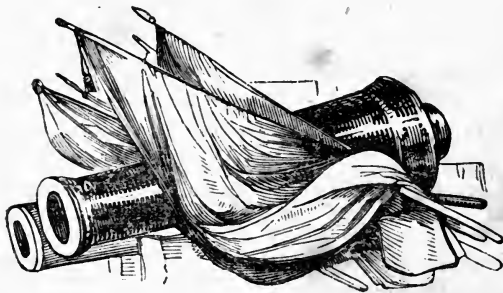
I would suggest the propriety of leaving Colonel Zachary Taylor of the first infantry in command of them."

Accordingly Colonel Taylor received the command of the posts along the frontier.

General Jesup having reported that the operations in Florida would probably terminate on the first of May, the Adjutant General issued a "general order" on the tenth of April, 1838, making such a disposition of the forces as seemed necessary. The fifth article of this paper reads as follows :

"Major General Jesup will take all the necessary orders for the prompt execution of this order, and will then turn over the command of the troops in Florida to brevet Brigadier-General Z. Taylor, Colonel of the first infantry and——resume the duties of Quartermaster General."

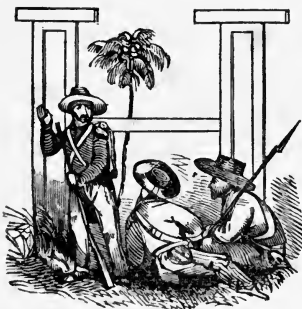
Agreeably to this order, General Taylor assumed the command of the Florida army in the following May. Here he remained until 1840, when, upon requesting leave to retire, he was relieved by Brigadier-General Armistead, and with his family arrived in New Orleans on the 21st of June.





CHAPTER III.

Commencement of the Mexican War.



HITHERTO we have viewed General Taylor as the commander of but small forces, and acting under circumstances not very favorable to the acquisition of a general or lasting popularity. The mass of a community reward an achievement according to the splendor of its outward brilliancy, forgetting that the events which they designate as small, may have required for their successful performance the highest degree of labor and talent. Accordingly, at the close of the war of 1812, many brave men, who had done valuable service to their country in an unostentatious manner, were allowed to sink into comparative oblivion. Such was the fate of the defender of Fort Harrison; though

that event was brilliant in itself, the first burst of enthusiasm which attended its performance soon passed away, and from that time to the end of the war we are not able to trace the history of its principal actor. From this obscurity he was called to the command in Florida, where he won for himself fresh approbation, and during a short time enjoyed a considerable share of the reputation which his merits deserve. Yet the hero of Okee-Chobee was also forgotten, and when subsequently called to a wide and trying theatre of action, the nation stared upon him as upon a stranger, and half contemptuously inquired "Who is General Taylor?"

Upon the close of the Seminole war it seems to have been the intention of the General to retire from military life; in this, however, he was not indulged by government. In 1841, not long after his arrival at New Orleans, he was ordered to relieve General Arbuckle in the command of the second department on the Arkansas river. While at Little Rock, on his way to Fort Gibson, he was tendered a public dinner by the citizens of that town, as an expression of esteem for his "personal worth and meritorious public services." In a brief note the General declined this invitation, on account of the journey being already protracted an unusual length of time, and of his being anxious to proceed on as rapidly as possible to his destined post. Soon after he changed his head-quarters to Fort Smith, and subsequently was transferred to Fort Jesup, Louisiana.

Meanwhile difficulties had arisen between the United States and Mexico, which threatened to result in an appeal to arms. The principal cause of these disturbances, was the course pursued by the former government with regard to the admission of Texas into her confederation.

Prior to the year 1834, this country formed a state of Mexico, under the title of the Department of Tamaulipas. It had, however, been settled almost entirely by emigrants from the United States, many arriving there as early as 1820. Upon the adoption of a new constitution by Mexico, in 1834, Texas refused to accede to it, and a war with the mother country was the consequence. This was carried on with various success, until the early part of 1836, when General Santa Anna, President of Mexico, was defeated and cap-

tured in a battle at St. Jacinto, by the Texan and American forces under General Houston. This delivered Texas from invasion, and a convention of delegates soon afterwards declared the country a free and sovereign republic, and elected Houston as their President.

Mexico, however, would not recognize the independence of Texas, but was hindered by the distracted state of her government from prosecuting a plan of subjugation.

While matters were in this condition, the peculiar amity existing between Texas and the United States, led the government of the latter power to digest a plan for the union of the two countries under a common flag. This scheme was called the project for the "Annexation of Texas," and was first broached in the latter part of the administration of President Tyler.

Of course a measure involving so many important interests to both countries, would be viewed differently by different minds. Accordingly, its propriety and even constitutionality, were ably and thoroughly discussed by all the leading journals of the day, and numerous petitions were presented to Congress, both for and against the annexation. After much delay, however, the resolution passed both branches of that body in March 1845, and the act was subsequently ratified by the Texan Congress. Upon this accession of territory President Polk, who succeeded Mr. Tyler, congratulated Congress in his first annual message of December 2d.

Meanwhile Mexico was not idle. Though torn by civil dissensions she had ever indulged a hope of the redemption of Tamaulipas, and the fear that it was soon to be irrecoverably lost, roused her at once to activity. As soon as the rumor reached her of the designs of the United States government, she instructed her minister to enter a solemn national protest against the annexation; the American minister was also refused a hearing, and every preparation made to raise forces to cope with her neighbor.

Under these circumstances it was thought advisable to station a military force in Texas, to repel any sudden invasion which might be made by the Mexicans. Accordingly, some months before the annexation, the following order was directed to General Taylor:

"September 17th, 1844.

"SIR—The General-in-Chief has received instructions, through

the Department of State from the Executive, to hold the troops between the Red and Sabine rivers ready to march in case of a requisition being made by the *Chargé d’Affaires* residing near the government of Texas, as the said *Chargé* may designate, in order to restrain any hostile incursion on the part of the border Indians, as required by the provisions of existing treaties.

“ You will please to take such preliminary measures as may be deemed necessary to put the great part of the forces under your command designated above, in march for the above purpose at short notice.

“ Should the apprehended hostilities with the Indians alluded to, break out, an officer of rank, probably yourself, will be sent to command the United States forces placed in the field, and who will receive hereafter further instructions from his government.

“ L. THOMAS,

“ Assistant Adjutant-General.

“ BRIGADIER-GENERAL Z. TAYLOR,

“ Com. 1st Department, Fort Jesup, La.”

This preparatory step with regard to the Indians, seems to have been but a kind of introduction to more important operations. The southern department included the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia, and on the twenty-first of March further orders were issued to the General, to prepare the troops from these states, and hold them in readiness to be moved into Texas as soon as ordered. On the 28th of May following, the Secretary of War, Mr. Marcy, addressed a confidential letter to him, directing him “ by order of the President, to cause the forces now under your command, and those which may be assigned to it, to be put into a position where they may most promptly and efficiently act in the defence of Texas, in the event it should become necessary, or proper to employ them for that purpose.”

Further orders were soon after issued by Mr. Bancroft, acting secretary in the absence of Mr. Marcy ; we extract the following from his letter :

[“ CONFIDENTIAL.”]

“ *War Department, June 15th, 1845.*

“ SIR—On the fourth of July, or very soon thereafter, the con-

vention of the people of Texas will probably accept the proposition of annexation under the joint resolution of the late Congress of the United States. That acceptance will constitute Texas an integral portion of our country.

“In anticipation of that event, you will forthwith make a forward movement, with the troops under your command, and advance to the mouth of the Sabine, or such other point on the Gulf of Mexico, or its navigable rivers, as in your judgment may be most convenient for an embarkation at the proper time for the western frontier of Texas.*****The point of your ultimate destination is the western frontier of Texas, where you will select and occupy in or near the Rio Grande del Norte, such a site as will consist with the health of your troops, and will be best adapted to repel invasion, and to protect what, in the event of annexation, will be our western border. You will limit yourself to the defence of the territory of Texas, unless Mexico should declare war against the United States.

“Your movement to the Gulf of Mexico, and your preparations to embark for the western frontier of Texas, are to be made without delay; but you will not effect a landing on that frontier until you have yourself ascertained the due acceptance, by Texas, of the proffered terms of annexation.”

The duties of the General were still further defined in a communication from Mr. Marcy, from which the following is extracted:—“This Department is informed that Mexico has some military establishments on the east side of the Rio Grande, which are, and for some time have been, in the actual occupancy of her troops. In carrying out the instructions heretofore received, you will be careful to avoid any acts of aggression unless an actual war shall exist. The Mexican forces at the posts in their possession, and which have been so, will not be disturbed as long as the relations of peace between the United States and Mexico continue.”

From New Orleans, on the 20th of July, General Taylor acknowledges the receipt of this letter, and expresses his gratification at receiving such instructions, “as they confirm my views previously communicated in regard to the proper line to be occupied at present by our troops, those instructions will be closely followed, and the

Department may rest assured that I will take no step to interrupt the friendly relations between the United States and Mexico."

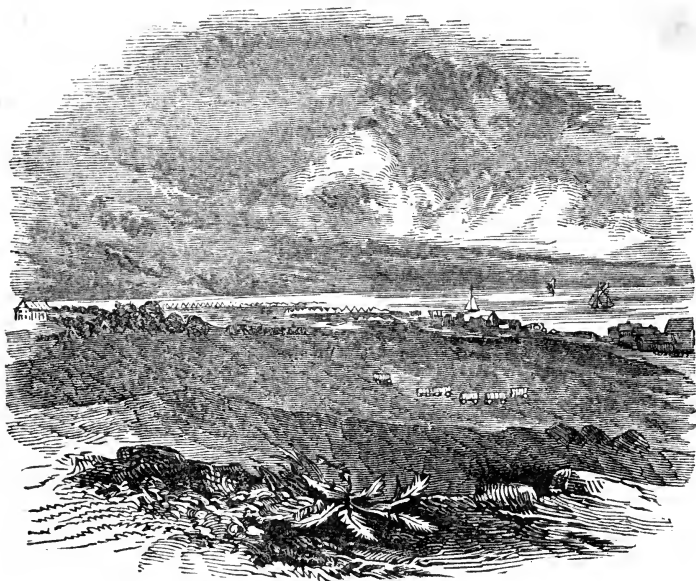
Upon the reception of this letter, the Secretary addressed him another, of which we give the portion immediately relative to our subject. It is dated on the 30th of July :

" While avoiding, as you have been instructed to do, all aggressive measures towards Mexico, as long as the relations of peace exist between that country and the United States, you are expected to occupy, protect, and defend the territory of Texas, to the extent that it has been occupied by the people of Texas. The Rio Grande is claimed to be the boundary between the two countries, and up to this boundary you are to extend your protection, only excepting any posts on the eastern side thereof, which are in the actual occupancy of Mexican forces or Mexican settlements over which the republic of Texas did not exercise jurisdiction at the time of annexation, or shortly before that event. It is expected that in selecting the establishment for your troops, you will approach as near the boundary line, the Rio Grande, as prudence will dictate. With this view the President desires that your position, for part of your forces at least, should be west of the Neuces."

In consequence of these directions, General Taylor crossed the Neuces, and in August concentrated his forces at Corpus Christi.

In the latter part of that month the General received further instructions as follows :—

" An order has been this day issued for sending one thousand more men into Texas, to join those under your command. When the existing orders are carried into effect, you will have with you a force of four thousand men of the regular army. We are not enabled to judge what auxiliary force can, upon an emergency, be brought together from Texas, and, as a precautionary measure, you are authorized to accept volunteers from the States of Louisiana and Alabama, and even from Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky. Should Mexico declare war, or commence hostilities by crossing the Rio Grande with a considerable force, you are instructed to lose no time of giving information to the authorities of each or any of the above mentioned States, as to the number of volunteers you may want from them respectively. Should you require troops from any of these



Corpus Christi and the American Camp.

States, it would be important to have them with the least possible delay. It is not doubted that at least two regiments from New Orleans, and one from Mobile could be obtained, and expeditiously brought into the field. You will cause it to be known at these places what number and description of troops you desire to receive from them in the contemplated emergency. The authorities of these States will be apprised that you are authorized to receive volunteers from them, and you may calculate that they will promptly join you when it is made known that their services are required. Arms, ammunition, and camp equipage for the auxiliary troops that you may require, will be sent forward subject to your orders. Orders have been issued to the naval force in the Gulf of Mexico to co-operate with you. You will as far as practicable hold communication with the commanders of our national vessels in your vicinity, and avail yourself of any assistance that can be derived from their co-operation. You will avail yourself of these vessels, and all

other proper means to keep the government here advised of your operations, and of the state of things in Texas and Mexico."

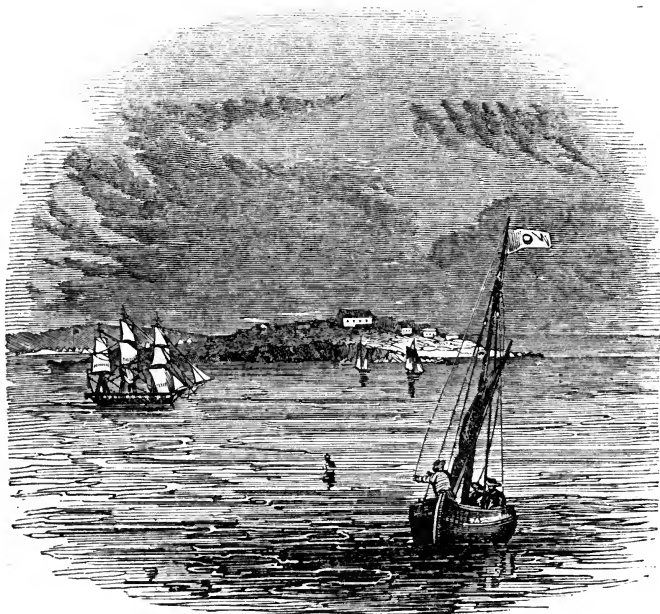
In consequence of these orders the army left Corpus Christi on the 11th of March, 1846, and marched westward. On the 20th of the same month they reached the Colorado, having encountered on their journey the most appalling hardships, both from the heat of the sandy deserts over which they passed, and the want of food and water. The discipline acquired in camp, where large portions of the troops had for the first time an opportunity of seeing and learning the evolutions of the line, was here amply tested; and it should be recorded to the honor of the soldiers, that throughout their whole march they bore their hardships with patience and cheerfulness.

At the Colorado the army were to obtain the first sight of the enemy over whom they were soon so signally to triumph. A party of Mexicans were stationed on the west bank, and threatened to fire upon any one who should attempt to cross. The General immediately arranged his army in order of battle, and despatched a party to open a road for his troops along the beach of the river. At the same time the Mexicans were themselves notified, that should they oppose the intended passage a battle would be the consequence. While the army were taking the necessary defensive measures, General Mejia, aid-de-camp to the Mexican commander of Matamoras, brought a despatch from his superior, stating that the passage of the Colorado by the United States army, would be regarded as a declaration of war, and the signal for the commencement of hostilities.

Notwithstanding this belligerent aspect of the Mexicans they made no actual effort to resist the crossing, which was conducted by General Worth, assisted by Captain C. F. Smith, the field pieces being placed in battery on the bank so as to cover the whole. It were difficult to point out in all the annals of warfare, a more culpable piece of negligence than the non-resistance of the Mexicans on this occasion; for by a resolute opposition, they might have seriously retarded if not altogether prevented the passage. But they chose to retreat.

Being thus unexpectedly delivered from immediate battle by the flight of the enemy, the army on the 22d recommenced their march for Matamoras. This city is situated on the Gulf of Mexico, having

the mouth of the Rio Grande on the east. The country between it and the Colorado is a flat open plain, covered with rank weeds and grass. At a distance by land of twenty-five miles east of Matamoras, on an arm of the Gulf called Brazos Santiago, is Point Isabel, General



Point Isabel.

Taylor's intended military depot. On arriving at the road which runs between the two places, the General learned that the Mexicans were already at the Point. In consequence of this information he changed his original route, and leaving the main body of the army with General Worth, pushed forward with his dragoons and artillery for that place. When near this destination he was met by a civic delegation, at the head of which was the Prefect of Tamaulipas, who protested in the name of their country against the occupation of Texas. While the conference was going on, the General observed several volumes of smoke arise from the houses at the Point, and immediately concluded that it had been fired by the Mexicans. The

safety of this station was a matter of great importance, and accordingly, in order to lose no time, the delegation was immediately dismissed, with the assurance that they should receive an answer when the American army had arrived opposite Matamoras. At the same time Colonel Twiggs was sent forward with the dragoons to arrest the conflagration and capture the incendiaries. Upon his arrival he found Point Isabel deserted; both citizens and military, with General Garcia at their head, having fled at his approach. The public buildings had been fired, but he succeeded in saving some of them.

Meanwhile, the main army under General Worth had remained encamped about six miles from the point of its separation from General Taylor. Here the latter joined them soon after the capture of Point Isabel, and they resumed their march to the Rio Grande. They crossed the plain where subsequently were fought the battles of the 8th and 9th of May, and arrived about noon of the 28th of March opposite Matamoras. Here the army formed its encampment, and for the first time planted the American flag upon the shores of the "Great River of the North."

During the whole course of this fatiguing march, and while he was stationed at Corpus Christi, the commander took great pains to impress upon the people and authorities that he was not advancing as an enemy, nor to make war upon Mexico, but solely to assert the right of the United States to Texas up to the Rio Grande. Even the protest of the Prefect of Tamaulipas, and the warning at the Colorado, had led to no harsh words or violent measures, but thus far all was bloodless.

In his despatches of the 29th of March and 6th of April, General Taylor thus notices his fortifications before Matamoras, and the dispositions of the enemy:—"Our approach seems to have created unusual excitement at that place, and a great deal of activity has been displayed" (by the enemy) "since our arrival in the preparation of batteries.*****The attitude of the Mexicans is so far decidedly hostile. An interview has been held, by my direction, with the military authorities of Matamoras, but with no satisfactory result." "On our side a battery, for four eighteen pounders, will be completed and the guns placed in battery to-day. These guns bear

directly upon the public square of Matamoras, and within good range for demolishing the town. Their object cannot be mistaken by the enemy."

The "interview" here alluded to, was held between General Worth and commanding General Mejia, soon after our flag had been displayed upon the left bank of the river. Its object was the delivery of despatches from General Taylor, and the obtaining of an interview with the American Consul. Mejia did not attend personally, but was represented by General la Vega, the Licenciado Censares, and Juan N. Garza, aided by an interpreter. After much altercation, the accepting of the despatches was refused, and a similar ominous result attended the request of an interview with the consul.

While employed in the erection of their fortifications, the army received intelligence that General Ampudia was approaching with a large force, to the relief of Matamoras. Soon after, the following proclamation was circulated through the American camp:

"The Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican army to the English and Irish under the orders of the American General Taylor.

"KNOW YE—That the government of the United States is committing repeated acts of barbarous aggression against the magnanimous Mexican nation; that the government which exists 'under the flag of the stars' is unworthy the designation of Christian. Recollect that you were born in Great Britain; that the American government looks with coldness upon the powerful flag of St. George, and is provoking to a rupture the warlike people to whom it belongs, President Polk boldly manifesting a desire to take possession of Oregon, as he has already done of Texas. Now then come with all confidence to the Mexican ranks; and I guarantee to you upon my honor good treatment, and that all your expenses shall be defrayed, until your arrival in the beautiful capital of Mexico.

"Germans, French, Poles, and individuals of other nations! Separate yourselves from the Yankees, and do not contribute to defend a robbery and usurpation, which be assured, the civilized nations of Europe look upon with the utmost indignation. Come therefore and array yourselves under the tri-colored flag; in the confidence

that the God of armies protects it, and that it will protect you equally with the English.

“PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

“FRANCISCO R. MORENO, *Adj't of the Commander-in-Chief.*

“HEAD-QUARTERS UPON THE ROAD TO MATAMORAS,
April 2, 1846.”

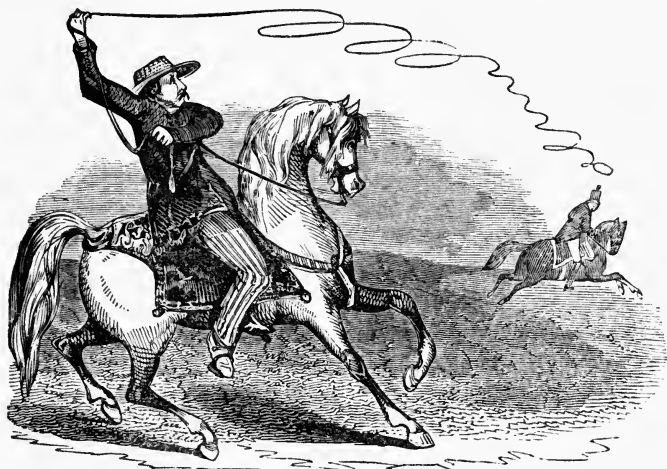
Such a proclamation, of course, would only be treated with contempt.

Hitherto, though both armies stood in a hostile attitude, nothing of the “last resort of injured nations” had actually occurred. This state of things was now broken. On the 10th of April an event took place, which though it involved a case of only individual suffering, yet on account of the character of the victim, and the circumstances attendant upon his death, was sufficient to damp the high spirits of the whole army, and to fill its officers with melancholy. That event was the murder of Colonel Cross.

He had ridden out in the morning, accompanied by his son, to take his usual morning exercise. In a short time the son returned without his father. This created the first apprehensions, which were increased by the non-appearance of the colonel at night. The army became alarmed, scouts were despatched in every direction, letters were sent to the Mexican general, and every means taken to obtain information of the unfortunate officer. The search continued until the 21st, when the mutilated body was found and brought to the army, by whom it was solemnly interred. The commander of Matamoras disclaimed all connection with his death, and there is little reason to doubt that he was murdered by a party of “rancheros” or mounted outlaws, numbers of whom then infested the neighborhood.

These rancheros are a sort of half-savage population, answering to the *guachos* of the pampas of Buenos Ayres. They spend most of their time on horseback, and use the lasso, a long cord or strip of hide with a noose at the end, which they throw with such dexterity as to catch wild horses or cattle, or drag a horseman from his seat. Attached to an army, they serve as a sort of irregular cavalry, and under certain circumstances might become nearly as formidable as the Cossacks of the Don were in the disastrous retreat of Napoleon from Moscow. But in this Mexican war their want of discipline and their poltroonery, have rendered them rather objects of

contempt than apprehension to the American soldiers. It is only the straggler, or small parties detached from the main army and off their guard, that they have ever been able in any measure to annoy.



A Ranchero.

On the 11th General Ampudia entered Matamoras at the head of one thousand cavalry and fifteen hundred infantry, and assumed the command. The Mexicans hailed his entrance by the ringing of bells, firing of cannon, peals of music, and other indications of extravagant joy. His arrival was little less welcome to the Americans, as it was supposed to be the harbinger of either war or peace.

The commander was not long in defining his position. On the morning of the 12th he sounded for a parley, and sent two officers with a despatch to General Taylor. As the paper is curious, we insert it, together with the reply:—

“FOURTH MILITARY DIVISION, }
 General-in-Chief. }

“To explain to you the many grounds for the just grievances felt by the Mexican nation, caused by the United States government, would be a loss of time, and an insult to your good sense; I therefore pass at once to such explanations as I consider of absolute necessity.

“Your government in an incredible manner—you will even permit me to say an extravagant one, if the usage or general rules established and received among all civilized nations are regarded—has not only insulted, but has exasperated the Mexican nation, bearing its conquering banner to the left bank of the Rio Bravo del Norte; and in this case by explicit and definite orders of my government, which neither can, will, nor should receive new outrages, I require you in all form, and at latest in the peremptory term of twenty-four hours, to break up your camp and retire to the other bank of the Neuces river, while our governments are regulating the pending question in relation to Texas. If you insist in remaining upon the soil of the department of Tamaulipas, it will clearly result that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question; and in that case I advise you that we accept the war to which, with so much injustice on your part you provoke us, and that on our part this war shall be conducted conformably to the principles established by the most civilized nations; that is to say, that the law of nations and of war shall be the guide of my operations; trusting that on your part the same will be observed.

“With this view I tender you the considerations due to your person and respectable office.

“God and Liberty?”

“HEAD-QUARTERS AT MATAMORAS, 2 o'clock, P. M., April 12, 1846.

“PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

“Sr. General-in-Chief U. S. Army, }
DON Z. TAYLOR.” }

TAYLOR'S REPLY.

“HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }
Camp near Matamoras, Texas, April 12, 1846. }

“Senor: I have had the honor to receive your note of this date, in which you summon me to withdraw the forces under my command from their present position and beyond the river Nueces, until the pending question between our governments, relative to the limits of Texas, shall be settled.

“I need hardly advise you that, charged as I am in only a military capacity with the performance of specific duties, I cannot enter into a discussion of the international question involved in the advance

of the American army. You will, however, permit me to say, that the government of the United States has constantly sought a settlement by negotiation of the question of boundary ; that an envoy was despatched to Mexico for that purpose, and that up to the most recent dates, said envoy had not been received by the actual Mexican government, if indeed he has not received his passports and left the republic. In the meantime, I have been ordered to occupy the country up to the left bank of the Rio Grande, until the boundary shall be definitely settled. In carrying out these instructions I have carefully abstained from all acts of hostility, obeying in this regard, not only the letter of my instructions, but the plain dictates of justice and humanity.

“The instructions under which I am acting will not permit me to retrograde from the position I now occupy. In view of the relations between our respective governments, and the individual suffering which may result, I regret the alternative which you offer ; but at the same time wish it to be understood, that I shall by no means avoid such alternative, leaving the responsibility with those who rashly commence hostilities. In conclusion, you will permit me to give you the assurance, that on my part the laws and customs of war among civilized nations shall be carefully observed.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

“*ST. GEN. D. PEDRO D. AMPUDIA.*”

The “peremptory term” of General Ampudia expired without producing any other result than an anxious inquietude throughout the American army. It is, however, very probable, that when writing his communication, he really intended an attack, but was subsequently hindered by the refusal of the citizens of Matamoras to co-operate with him.

On the 18th, the American army was called to lament the loss of another of its officers—Lieutenant Theodoric H. Porter, of Pennsylvania. On the day previous he had set out with ten men to find the body of Colonel Cross, and on the 18th encountered a body of armed Mexicans, who numbered as he supposed, at least one hundred and fifty. The Americans were greeted by a pretty smart fire, which they returned, routing the enemy, and capturing their camp and horses. While passing through a wood on their return, the

party were again fired upon, by a hidden foe. Heavy rains had wetted the powder of the Americans, and they became scattered into groups of two and three. They lost three men in this affair, among whom was the lieutenant, said to have been stabbed by the Mexicans, subsequent to receiving a shot in the thigh. He was a son of the late Commodore Porter, and left a young bride to lament his untimely death. His loss was severely regretted by the army.

On the 22d a correspondence took place between the two commanders, relative to two provision vessels bound to Matamoras, whose progress had been stopped by command of General Taylor. The letter of Ampudia accuses the American commander of violating the laws of nations, and wantonly and unnecessarily exposing life and property by a blockade of the Rio Grande. It also severely reprobates the occupation of Texas, and incidentally threatens a weighty retribution, in case the Mexicans should meet with an unlooked for refusal, of certain demands. Both these letters give a very lucid picture of the position of affairs at that time, and we insert them entire.

“DIVISION OF THE NORTH, }
Second General-in-Chief. }

“From various sources worthy of confidence, I have learned that some vessels bound for the mouth of the river, have not been able to effect an entrance into that port, in consequence of your orders that they should be conducted to Brazos Santiago. The cargo of one of them is composed in great part, and of the other entirely of provisions, which the contractors charged with providing for the army under my orders had procured to fulfil the obligations of their contracts. You have taken possession of these provisions by force, and against the will of the proprietors, one of whom is vice-consul of her Catholic Majesty, and the other of her Britannic Majesty; and whose rights instead of being religiously respected as was professed, and as was to be hoped from the observance of the principles which govern among civilized nations, have on the contrary, been violated in the most extraordinary manner, opposed to the guarantee and respect due to private property.

“Nothing could have authorized you in such a course. The commerce of nations is not suspended or interrupted, except in con-

sequence of a solemn declaration of blockade, communicated and established in the form prescribed by international law. Nevertheless, you have infringed these rules ; and by an act which can never be viewed favorably to the United States government, have hindered the entrance to a Mexican port, of vessels bound to it under the confidence that commerce would not be interrupted. My duties do not allow me to consent to this new species of hostility, and they constrain me to require of you, not only that the vessels taken by force to Brazos Santiago, shall be at liberty to return to the mouth of the river, but the restoration of all the provisions which besides belonging to private contractors were destined for the troops on this frontier. I consider it useless to inculcate the justice of this demand, and the results which may follow an unlooked for refusal.

"I have also understood that two Mexicans, carried down in a boat by the current of the river, near one of the advanced posts of your camp, were detained after being fired upon, and that they are still kept and treated as prisoners. The individuals in question do not belong to the army, and this circumstance exempts them from the laws of war. I therefore hope that you will place them absolutely at liberty, as I cannot be persuaded that you pretend to extend, to persons not military, the consequences of an invasion which, without employing this means of rigor against unarmed citizens, is marked in itself with the seal of universal reprobation.

"I avail myself of this opportunity to assure you of my distinguished consideration.

"God and liberty.

"MATAMORAS, *April 22, 1846.*

"PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

"Sr. Gen. Don Z. TAYLOR."

The General's reply is pointed and dignified. He enters at length into the treatment which he had received from Mexican embassies, refutes the charges of violating the law of nations, and of cruelty, and firmly challenges the threatened "results" consequent upon the prosecution of his course. It is, perhaps, one of the *longest* letters which the General ever wrote.

"HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }
Camp near Matamoras, Texas, April 22, 1846. }

"SIR—I have had the honor to receive your communication of

this date, in which you complain of certain measures adopted by my orders, to close the mouth of the Rio Bravo against vessels bound to Matamoras, and in which you also advert to the case of two Mexicans supposed to be detained as prisoners in this camp.

“After all that has passed since the American army first approached the Rio Bravo, I am certainly surprised that you should complain of a measure, which is no other than a natural result of the state of war so much insisted upon by the Mexican authorities, as actually existing at this time. You will excuse me for recalling a few circumstances to show that this state of war has not been sought by the American army, but has been forced upon it, and that the exercise of rights incident to such a state cannot be made a subject of complaint.

“On breaking up my camp at Corpus Christi, and moving forward with the army under my orders to occupy the left bank of the Rio Bravo, it was my earnest desire to execute my instructions in a pacific manner; to observe the utmost regard for the personal rights of all citizens residing on the left bank of the river, and to take care that the religion and customs of the people should suffer no violation. With this view, and to quiet the minds of the inhabitants, I issued orders to the army, enjoining a strict observance of the rights and interests of all Mexicans residing on the river, and caused said orders to be translated into Spanish, and circulated in the several towns on the Bravo. These orders announced the spirit in which we proposed to occupy the country, and I am proud to say, that up to this moment the same spirit has controlled the operations of the army. On reaching the Arroyo Colorado, I was informed by a Mexican officer, that the order in question had been received in Matamoras; but was told at the same time, that if I attempted to cross the river, it would be regarded as a declaration of war. Again, on my march to Frontone, I was met by a deputation of the civil authorities of Matamoras, protesting against my occupation of a portion of the department of Tamaulipas, and declaring that if the army was not at once withdrawn war would result. While this communication was in my hands, it was discovered that the village of Frontone had been set on fire and abandoned. I viewed this as a direct act of war, and informed the delegation that their communication

would be answered by me when opposite Matamoras, which was done in respectful terms. On reaching the river I despatched an officer, high in rank, to convey to the commanding general in Matamoras the expression of my desire for amicable relations, and my willingness to leave open to the use of the citizens of Matamoras the port of Brazos Santiago, until the question of boundary should be definitely settled. This officer received for reply from the officer selected to confer with him, that my advance to the Rio Bravo was considered as a veritable act of war, and he was absolutely refused an interview with the American consul, in itself an act incompatible with a state of peace.

“Notwithstanding these repeated assurances on the part of the Mexican authorities, and notwithstanding the most obviously hostile preparations on the right bank of the river, accompanied by a rigid non-intercourse, I carefully abstained from any act of hostility, determined that the onus of producing an actual state of hostilities, should not rest with me. Our relations remained in this state until I had the honor to receive your note of the 12th instant, in which you denounce war as the alternative of my remaining in this position. As I could not under my instructions recede from my position, I accepted the alternative you offered me, and made all my dispositions to meet it suitably. But, still willing to adopt milder measures before proceeding to others, I contented myself in the first instance, with ordering a blockade of the mouth of the Rio Grande, by the naval forces under my orders—a proceeding perfectly consonant with the state of war so often declared to exist, and which you acknowledge in your note of the 10th instant relative to the late Colonel Cross. If this measure seem oppressive, I wish it borne in mind that it has been forced upon me by the course you have seen fit to adopt. I have reported this blockade to my government, and shall not remove it until I receive instructions to that effect, unless indeed, you desire an armistice pending the final settlement of the question between the governments, or until war shall be formally declared by either, in which case I shall cheerfully open the river. In regard to the consequences you mention as resulting from a refusal to remove the blockade, I beg you to understand that I am prepared for them, be they what they may.

“In regard to the particular vessels referred to in your communication, I have the honor to advise you that, in pursuance of my orders, two American schooners bound for Matamoras, were warned off on the 17th instant, when near the mouth of the river, and put to sea, returning probably to New Orleans. They were not seized, or their cargoes disturbed in any way, nor have they been in the harbor of Brazos Santiago to my knowledge. A Mexican schooner understood to be the ‘Juniata,’ was in or off that harbor, when my instructions to block the river were issued, but was driven to sea in a gale, since which time I have had no report concerning her. Since the receipt of your communication I have learned that two persons, sent to the mouth of the river to procure information respecting this vessel, proceeded thence to Brazos Santiago, where they were taken up and detained by the officer in command until my orders could be received. I shall order their immediate release. A letter from one of them to the Spanish vice-consul is respectfully transmitted herewith.

“In relation to the Mexicans said to have drifted down the river in a boat, and to be prisoners at this time in my camp, I have the pleasure to inform you that no such persons have been taken prisoners, or are now detained by my authority. The boat in question was carried down empty, by the current of the river, and drifted ashore near one of our pickets, and was secured by the guard. Some time afterwards an attempt was made to recover the boat under cover of the darkness; the individuals concerned were hailed by the guard, and, failing to answer were fired upon as a matter of course. What became of them is not known, as no trace of them could be discovered on the following morning. The officer of the Mexican guard directly opposite, was informed next day that the boat would be returned on proper application to me, and I have now only to repeat that assurance.

“In conclusion, I take leave to state, that I consider the tone of your communication highly exceptionable where you stigmatize the movement of the army under my orders as ‘marked with the seal of universal reprobation.’ You must be aware that such language is not respectful in itself, either to me or my government; and while I observe in my own correspondence the courtesy due to your high position, and to the magnitude of the interests with

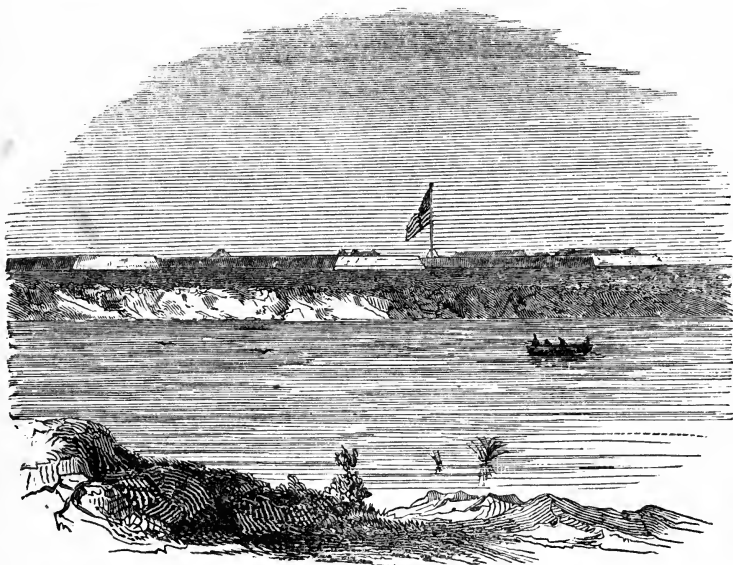
which we are respectively charged, I shall expect the same in return.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Brevet Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.

“Sr. Gen. D. PEDRO DE AMPUDIA, *Commanding in Matamoras.*”



Fort Brown.

Such was the disposition of the two armies when General Arista arrived and superseded Ampudia. The fort opposite Matamoras was now nearly completed. It covers a large area, having six bastion fronts, and other works of proportionate strength; and it was evident, from the daily progress of events, that its strength would soon be needed.

On the 21st, the following proclamation was circulated among the American soldiers, intended, like its predecessor, to estrange them from the cause of their country. It met with a similar success.

HEAD-QUARTERS AT MATAMORAS, }
April 20, 1846. }

Soldiers!—You have enlisted in time of peace to serve in that

army for a specific time ; but your obligations never implied that you were bound to violate the laws of God, and the most sacred right of friends ! The United States government, contrary to the wishes of a majority of all honest and honorable Americans, has ordered you to take *forcible* possession of the territory of a *friendly* neighbor, who has never given her consent to such occupation. In other words, while the treaty of peace and commerce between Mexico and the United States is in full force, the United States presuming on her strength and prosperity, and on our supposed imbecility and cowardice, attempts to make you the blind instruments of her unholy and mad ambition, and *force* you to appear as the hateful robbers of our dear homes, and the unprovoked violators of our dearest feelings as men and patriots. Such villany and outrage I know is perfectly repugnant to the noble sentiments of any gentleman, and it is base and foul to rush you on to certain death in order to aggrandize a few lawless individuals in defiance of the laws of God and man !

“ It is to no purpose if they tell you that the law for the annexation of Texas, justifies your occupation of the Rio Bravo del Norte ; for by this act they rob us of a great part of *Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Chihuahua, and New Mexico* ; and it is barbarous to send a handful of men, on such an errand, against a powerful and warlike nation. Besides, most of you are Europeans, and we are the *declared friends* of most of the nations of *Europe*. The North Americans are ambitious, overbearing, and insolent as a nation, and they will only make use of you as vile tools to carry out their abominable plans of pilage and rapine.

“ I warn you in the name of justice, honor, and your own interests and self-respect, to abandon their desperate and unholy cause, and become *peaceful Mexican* citizens. I guaranty you in such case, a half-section of land, or three hundred and twenty acres, to settle upon, gratis. Be wise then, and just and honorable, and take no part in murdering us who have no unkind feelings for you. Lands shall be given to officers, sergeants, and corporals, according to rank, privates receiving three hundred and twenty acres as stated.

“ If in time of action you wish to espouse our cause, throw away your arms and run to us, and we will embrace you as true friends.

and Christians. It is not decent nor prudent to say more. But should any of you render important service to Mexico, you shall be accordingly considered and preferred.

M. ARISTA,

Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican Army."

The arrival of General Arista at Matamoras, seems to have been the signal for the commencement of active duties. Every day brought fresh rumors that large bodies of Mexicans either were crossing or had crossed the river, and were marching toward the American camp. The following extracts from a letter of General Taylor will show his position prior to the attack upon Captain Thornton :

"Strong guards of foot and mounted men, are established on the margin of the river, and thus efficient means have been adopted on our part to prevent all intercourse. While opposite to us their pickets extend above and below for several miles, we are equally active in keeping up a strong and vigilant guard to prevent surprise or attacks under disadvantageous circumstances. This is the more necessary while we are to act on the defensive, and they are at liberty to take the opposite course, whenever they think proper to do so. Nor have we been idle in other respects ; we have a field work under way, besides having erected a strong battery, and a number of buildings for the security of our supplies, in addition to some respectable works for their protection. We have mounted a respectable battery, four pieces of which are long eighteen pounders, with which we could batter or burn down the city of Matamoras should it become necessary to do so. When our field work is completed—which will soon be the case—and mounted with its proper armament, five hundred men could hold it against as many thousand Mexicans. During the twenty-seven days since our arrival here, a most singular state of things has prevailed all through the outlines of the two armies, which to a certain extent have all the feelings as if there were actual war."

During the excitement consequent upon the above mentioned rumors, Captain Ker was sent down the river as far as Barita, but without gaining any information of the reported crossing. Upon his return a parley was sounded from the Mexican shore, and a messenger brought the following letter to the American General :

“MEXICAN ARMY:

“The course of events, since the annexation of Texas to the United States was declared, has been so clearly hostile to Mexico, and so foreign to the dignity and principles which the Americans have proclaimed to the world, that we come to the conclusion that their policy has changed, and their moderation has turned into a desire of aggrandizement, enriching themselves by humiliating their neighbors.

“The respect and consideration that friendly nations show to each other have been trampled upon, by which reason the justice and excessive moderation of Mexico shine forth still more. Pressed and forced into war, we enter in a struggle that cannot be avoided without failing in what is most sacred in man.

Political discussions do not appertain to military men, but to diplomatic agents; to us belongs the part to act, without it occasioning any surprise that the troops under my command should not wait for any thing else to give battle.

“We Mexicans have been calumniated as barbarous, in the most caustic and unjust terms; the occasion has arrived to show what we are, and I do not believe that in the troops under my command, there will be any cause to confirm such suppositions, as they will cause to shine the feelings of humanity and generosity that distinguish them.

“For the first time I have the honor to offer your excellency my great consideration.

“God and Liberty !

MARIANO ARISTA.

“HEAD-QUARTERS, MATAMORAS, *April 24, 1846.*”

Direction outside—“Mariano Arista, General-in-Chief of the Division of the North, to the General-in-Chief of the forces of the United States encamped opposite Matamoras.”

Inclosed was the following private note :

“ST. GEN. D. Z. TAYLOR.

“SIR:—I have just arrived in Matamoras, to take command of the troops that the government of my country have confided to my care. Your urbanity, as well as the customs known among gentlemen, make me salute you with all friendliness by means of this

private communication, assuring you that since fate has marked us to be immediate opponents in the struggles in which our countries are just entering, that at least all the laws of courtesy which reign between generals, carrying on a war between civilized nations, will be observed, and that you will always find in my acts, justice, love of humanity, and all the other qualities which make, in the present times, war less barbarous and unlike those of the middle ages.

“I have the pleasure of offering myself, with such motives, your affectionate servant,

MARIANO ARISTA.

“MATAMORAS, *April 24, 1846.*

In consequence of the rumored intentions of the enemy, Captain Thornton was despatched on the 24th to the crossing, above the fort, and Captain Ker below. Accompanying Thornton were Captain Hardee, Lieutenants Mason and Kane, and sixty-one men. After proceeding about twenty-six miles, they encountered a Mexican,



American Officer and Mexican Guide.

who reported that at a short distance the enemy were stationed to the number of two thousand, under General Torrejon. Partly from





the cowardice of their Mexican guide, and partly from ignorance of the country, they were led into a plantation surrounded by a thick chapparal fence, round which was concealed an ambush of more than ten times their number. Thornton, followed by his command, crossed the plantation to the house, where he commenced conversation with one of the residents. While thus engaged, the enemy took possession of the gate, and now for the first time, the party perceived that the chapparal was crowded with infantry, supported by cavalry, who were preparing for a charge. This was met with gallantry and success; but in the struggle Lieutenant Kane was unhorsed, and the captain became separated from his command. The whole Mexican force now poured in a destructive fire upon the few men under Captain Hardee, who, notwithstanding, rallied and endeavored to retreat by way of the river. This he was unable to accomplish, and after having eleven men killed, including a sergeant and two other officers, he consented to surrender, on condition of his men being treated as prisoners of war, declaring that if this were refused they would continue the battle at all hazards. This was acceded to, and the captain and twenty-five men were carried into Matamoras.

The bravery of Captain Thornton deserves notice. As we have stated, he met the charge of the cavalry with success, but was unable to break the crowded lines of the infantry by whom they were supported. The chapparal was at this time in one wide blaze of fire, and in rushing toward it the horse of the captain made a tremendous leap, completely clearing the whole enclosure, and alighted in the midst of the enemy. This feat, however, was not performed with impunity; the animal received a severe wound at the very moment of its accomplishment, and was subsequently obliged to carry his intrepid rider through a host of armed men. The captain escaped unwounded, and though both horse and rider subsequently encountered a severe fall, he succeeded in approaching within about five miles of the American camp. But at this place he was intercepted by an advance guard of the enemy, and conveyed prisoner to Matamoras.

Lieutenant Mason was killed before the chapparal, and Kane shared the fate of Thornton.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages against which the Americans contended, this affair was a source of unbounded exultation to the enemy. Besides public rejoicing in Matamoras, Arista wrote to General Torrejon in terms of congratulation, which would have been considered extravagant in General Taylor after the battle of Pa'o Alto.*

After the capture of Thornton, the Mexicans crossed the river in large detachments, and moving down to the east of the American camp, spread themselves between that station and Point Isabel. All communication between the two places was thus stopped, and the position of General Taylor became critical. Surrounded by an enemy far more numerous than his own army, cut off from intercourse with his military depot, prohibited by superior orders from acting on the offensive, and expecting each moment either to be attacked himself, or to receive news of the destruction of Point Isabel, it may well be supposed that his mind was filled with gloom and anxiety. In addition to this, he had but eight days' rations in camp, all his stores of provision being at the other station.

Under these circumstances, the first step of the General was to apprise the War Department at Washington that actual hostilities had commenced. He also wrote to the governor of Texas for twenty companies of foot riflemen, and to the governor of Louisiana for four regiments of infantry.

Upon leaving Point Isabel, General Taylor had appointed for its defence, Major John Monroe, at the head of two companies of artillery. His force was about four hundred and fifty men, besides which, the crews of vessels in the harbor united for his assistance, augmenting the number to about nine hundred. The artillery consisted of sixteen brass six pounders, two long eighteens, and two ship's guns. The garrison was amply provided with powder and ball, and the works were sufficiently strong to resist an enemy three times as numerous as the garrison. The fort received a valuable auxiliary in a body of Texan Rangers, commanded by Captain Samuel H. Walker, a young man who had greatly distinguished himself in the Texan struggle, in which he had been taken prisoner by the Mexi-

* Thorpe's "Our Army on the Rio Grande."

cans and carried to Salado.* Upon his arrival at the fort, he was stationed between it and the camp of General Taylor, with instructions to keep open, if possible, the communication between them. On the morning of the 28th, having ascertained that the object of the Mexicans was to surround both places, he set out with about seventy-five men, intending to penetrate to the camp.

After marching about twelve miles he suddenly encountered a

* SAMUEL H. WALKER, was born in Prince George county, Maryland, and prior to the present war with Mexico, was principally distinguished for his intrepidity and misfortunes in the Texan struggle. He was one of Colonel Fisher's three hundred men who marched against two thousand Mexicans stationed at Mier. He was captured by the enemy previous to the battle at that place, while on an excursion into their territory, and after the defeat of the Texans, he was marched, with the other prisoners, to Matamoras, and from thence to the castle of Perote, on their way to the capital. For a short time the prisoners were treated kindly; but as they receded from Texas, the Mexican officers threw off their reserve, and began to act more in conformity with the cruel disposition they had hitherto exhibited against the revolutionists. When they arrived at Salado, this cruelty had become so intolerable that the prisoners determined to revolt, and after slaughtering the guard, to make their escape. Among the foremost in the charge was Walker. When the signal was given, he seized one of the sentinels at the inner door of the prison yard, while Cameron, a Scotchman, seized the other. Both Mexicans were instantly disarmed, and the Texans rushed into the outer court, where the arms and cartridge boxes were guarded by one hundred and fifty Mexican infantry. These were soon driven out, and while the Texans were arming themselves, the Mexican cavalry and a company of infantry, formed in front of the outer gate. The Texans charged through them, killing nine or ten and wounding more, with a loss of five of their own number killed, and five wounded. The Texans numbered two hundred and fourteen, their enemy three hundred. The party escaped, but subsequently lost their way, and after wandering among the mountains and suffering the extremities of hunger and thirst, they were finally recaptured by straggling parties, and brought back to Salado. Here they were decimated by Santa Anna, and every tenth man shot. After the most appalling sufferings, Walker, with eight others, succeeded in escaping from the city of Mexico, and returned to Texas.

This expedition originally consisted of two hundred and sixty-one men. Of these, ten were killed at the battle of Mier, and six others subsequently died of wounds received there; five fell at the revolt at Salado, seventeen were shot by decimation, five died in the mountains, thirty-five of suffering and starvation in Mexico, eleven were released through the intervention of ministers, eight wounded at Mier effected their escape, and the remainder, including Walker, escaped from Mexico.

Walker then joined the Texan revenue service, of which he became an efficient member. But when the army of occupation entered the country on its way to Corpus Christi and Point Isabel, he joined the forces at the head of a body of partizan rangers. His subsequent career is given in the text, and he is now distinguished as the gallant Captain Walker of the United States service.

party of armed Mexicans, whose number he estimated at fifteen hundred. Most of his men, being new volunteers and entirely inexperienced, fled with precipitation. The remaining few met the charge of the enemy with firmness, and for fifteen minutes sustained a battle against forty times their number. They then retreated, and were pursued till within cannon shot of Point Isabel. The captain estimates the loss of the enemy at about thirty ; his own has never been made known.

Walker reached the fort at night of the same day, and with an intrepidity approaching to rashness, offered Major Monroe his services to carry any communication to General Taylor, provided he could be granted four men as companions. Although the proposal was regarded as Quixotic, he obtained permission, and six men immediately volunteered to accompany him. They set out next morning, and after several very narrow escapes, reached General Taylor's camp on the 30th.



Walker's Expedition setting out.



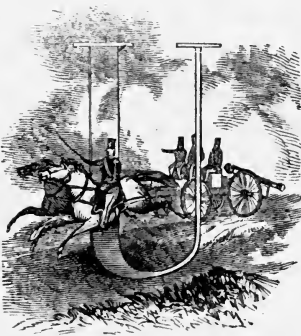
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Major Ringgold.

CHAPTER IV.

Battle of Palo Alto.



PON the reception of Captain Walker's intelligence, General Taylor resolved to set out in person with the greater part of his army, for the purpose of relieving Point Isabel and effecting the transportation of his supplies. Accordingly, leaving Major Brown in command of the works, assisted by two companies of artillery and the seventh regiment of infantry under Lieutenant Bragg and Captain Lowd, he left the camp on the 1st of May, and without any inter-

ruption reached Point Isabel next day. He found the place completely invested, and the utmost anxiety and excitement prevailing among the troops.

No sooner had General Taylor marched from the fort on the Rio Grande, than it became the theatre of most important operations. Matamoras hailed his departure by the ringing of bells, and loud shouts from the deceived populace, who fondly dreamed of a "retreat" by the American army. The *El Monitor Republicano* of May 4th, after expatiating on the admirable arrangements of Arista, thus notices the removal of the American forces :

"General Taylor dared not resist the valor and enthusiasm of the sons of Mexico. Well did he foresee the intrepidity with which our soldiers would rush against the usurpers of the national territory. Well did he know the many injuries which were to be avenged by those who had taken up arms, not to aggrandize themselves with the spoils of the property of others, but to maintain the independence of their country. Well did he know, we repeat it, that the Mexicans would be stopped neither by trenches, nor fortresses, nor large artillery. Thus it was that the chief of the American forces, frightened as soon as he perceived from the situation and proximity of his camp that our army were preparing to cross the river, left with precipitation for Point Isabel with almost all his troops, eight pieces of artillery, and a few wagons. Their march was observed from our position and here let me pay to our brave men the tribute which they deserve. The express verbally informed some of the troops which had not yet arrived at the ford, of the escape of the Americans ; in one instant all the soldiers spontaneously crossed the river, almost racing one with another The terror and haste with which the latter fled to the fort, to shut themselves up in it and avoid a conflict, frustrated the active measures of the most excellent Senor General Arista, which were to order the cavalry to appear in the plain, and to cut off the flight of the fugitives. But it was not possible to do so, notwithstanding their forced march during the night. General Taylor left his camp at two o'clock in the afternoon, and as fear has wings, he succeeded in shutting himself up in the fort. When our cavalry reached the point where they were to detain him, he had already passed and was several leagues

ahead. Great was the sorrow of our brave men not to have been able to meet the enemy face to face; their defeat was certain, and the main body of that invading army who thought that they inspired the Mexicans with so much respect, would have disappeared in the first important battle. But there was some fighting to be done, and the Americans do not know how to use other arms than those of duplicity and treachery. Why did they not remain with firmness under their colors? Why did they abandon the ground which they pretend to usurp with such iniquity? Thus has an honorable general kept his word. Had not General Taylor said in all his communications, that he was prepared to repel all hostilities? Why then does he fly in so cowardly a manner to shut himself up at the Point? The commander-in-chief of the American army has covered himself with opprobrium and ignominy, in sacrificing a part of his forces whom he left in the fortifications, to save himself; for it is certain that he will not return to their assistance—not that he is ignorant of their peril, but he calculates that his would be greater, if he had the temerity of attempting to resist the Mexican lances and bayonets in the open plain.”

Early on the morning of the 3d, the Mexican army in Matamoras opened upon the fort with a battery of seven guns. The fire was steadily returned by the Americans, who in about twenty minutes silenced that of the enemy. A heavy cannonade was then commenced by the Mexican lower fort and a mortar battery, which was kept up without intermission until midnight. In this bombardment the enemy expended about fifteen hundred shells and shot, but although these were directed principally at the workmen, who labored at the unfinished fortifications during the whole attack, yet they did very little execution.

Victory in this first day's attack declared for neither party; the Mexicans however, as will be perceived by the following extract from the *El Republicano*, May 4th, appropriated with their usual liberality all the glory to themselves, denouncing the conduct of the Americans as brutal, impotent, and cowardly, and arrogating complete success for the future:

“But let us relate the glorious events of yesterday. As Aurora dawned we began to fire from our ramparts on the fortifications of

the enemy, and the thunder of Mexican cannon was saluted by the reveillé from every point of our line, by the bell of the parochial church, and by the vivas of the inhabitants of Matamoras. In a moment the streets were filled, and all were rejoiced to see at last the hour arrived when we were to give a terrible lesson to the American camp, whose odious presence could no longer be tolerated. The enemy answered, but they were soon convinced that their artillery, although of a superior calibre, could not compete with ours. After a fire of five hours our ramparts remained immovable, on account of the solidity of their construction, and the intelligence with which the rules of art had been observed. The same did not happen to the American fortifications, whose bastions were so completely demolished, that towards 11 o'clock in the morning their artillery ceased to play and their fire was hushed. We continued to fire with activity during the day, without the enemy's daring to respond to us, because the parapets under which they would shelter themselves being destroyed, they had not courage to load their guns which remained uncovered. Unequalled glory and eternal honor to our brave countrymen.

“The enemy in their impotent rage, and before they concealed their shame behind the most distant parapets, had the barbarous pleasure of aiming their guns towards the city to destroy its edifices, as it was not in their power to destroy the fortifications from which they received so much injury. This wicked revenge which only springs from cowardly and miserable souls, did not meet with the success expected by those who so unworthily adorn themselves with the titles of *savans* and philanthropists. Their stupidity was equal to their wickedness. Almost all the balls passed too high, and those which touched the houses, although they were eighteen-pounders, did not cause any other mischief but that of piercing one or two walls.”

Between two and three o'clock on the morning of the 4th, Captain Walker with six rangers, reached the fort from Point Isabel. The cannonade had been heard at that station, and as it continued hour after hour, it created the most thrilling excitement. General Taylor determined to know something of the garrison, and selected Captain May to effect a communication. He had one hundred

men, and was accompanied by Captain Walker with six of the Texan rangers. He was instructed to choose a position favorable to reconnoitering the enemy, and from which he might with safety detach Walker to the major, but on no account to risk a battle.*

May set out at two o'clock in the afternoon of the 3d, and at nine had marched so far as to perceive the guard fires of the enemy, who were encamped at Palo Alto. By skilful manœuvering he escaped the observation of the enemy, and marching round their front, concealed his party behind a chapparal between the Mexicans and the Rio Grande. Walker was then despatched to the fort, with directions to learn the force of any enemy he might encounter, as well as to ascertain if Major Brown was still able to maintain his position. He arrived at the fort without meeting the enemy, and after obtaining fresh horses, set out to rejoin Captain May. On arriving at the station where he had left that officer, he found it deserted, and that large bodies of the Mexicans had scattered themselves in various directions to intercept him and his rangers. He therefore returned to the camp, where he remained during that day.

The command of Captain May had remained near the chapparal until they were discovered by the enemy. It now became dangerous to remain longer, and as it was very probable that Walker had been captured, orders were given to return to Point Isabel. On the

* Very little is known of the biography of Colonel May previous to the present war. He is a native of the city of Washington, and son of Dr. May. "On organizing the second regiment of dragoons during General Jackson's administration, he was among those who, from civil life received a commission as lieutenant in the corps, and was ordered to Florida, where the regiment was subjected to severe active service against the Seminoles, and the lieutenant was entrusted with many responsible duties. One of these led him into a personal rencontre with the celebrated chief of the tribe, Philip, upon whose camp a charge was made, and the chieftain knocked down and secured by Lieutenant May, just as he raised his rifle to shoot that officer."

May is now a captain in the American army, and is noted for the intrepidity and efficiency of his cavalry charges, especially the brilliant one of Resaca de la Palma, where he captured General la Vega, and all his park of artillery. He has lately visited the United States, advancing as far north as Washington, and being every where received with the warmest enthusiasm.

The captain is said to present a whimsical appearance. His form is long and lean, and his hair and beard so long as to stream behind him, as he rides in the wind. His favorite charger "Tom," appears to be as singular as his rider, and both together, to use the language of a volunteer, are *enough to frighten the Mexicans*.

way he encountered about one hundred and fifty lancers, whom he charged, routed, and pursued for about three miles toward their camp. He then proceeded toward Point Isabel, which he reached at nine o'clock.

Meanwhile, the soldiers under Major Brown were industriously laboring at the fort. Since the departure of General Taylor they had worked night and day, even while continually exposed to the batteries of the enemy; and the works were now considered strong enough to resist any effort of the Mexicans. Throughout the whole of the 4th a renewal of the bombardment was confidently expected, but in this the garrison were disappointed.

In the evening Captain Walker made a second attempt to reach Point Isabel and was successful. His success was mainly owing to his perfect knowledge of the country and of the enemy's positions.

Major Brown had been instructed not to attempt relieving himself by a sally from the fort; yet he was not permitted to remain long idle. Throughout the morning of the 5th, thousands of Mexican troops filled the plain, evincing by their varied movements, that preparations were then in progress for an assault. It was soon ascertained that they had erected a strong battery during the night in the rear of the fort, and that a vigorous cannonading was to be commenced on both sides of the river. At about five in the afternoon, this battery commenced a heavy fire upon the garrison, which was immediately seconded by the cannon of Matamoras. These were vigorously answered by the six-pound howitzer batteries of the fort, and after a little while the assailants ceased firing. Considerable reconnoitering now took place between light bodies of the Mexicans and a few Americans under Lieutenant Hanson, who had obtained permission from Major Brown to leave the fort for that purpose. Before midnight the works were completely invested, and according to a preconcerted signal, Major Brown discharged his eighteen pounders, at regular intervals, to inform General Taylor of his situation.

On the 6th, the firing was renewed on the part of the enemy, but the Americans having but a scanty supply of ammunition, were obliged to remain quiet.

Hitherto we have seen the bombardment carried on with little

loss to the garrison ; they, however, were to feel the scourge of war as well as the enemy ; and the 6th of May became memorable for the fall of their brave commander. In the afternoon, he had been taking his customary official round among the soldiers, and stopped for a moment to give instructions to some of the men who were engaged in constructing the works. Suddenly a shell struck the ground near him, tearing up the soil in large fragments, and completely enveloping the major in a cloud of dust. He was observed to fall, and to the horror of the soldiers, the air became clear only to exhibit the sad spectacle of their suffering commander. His right leg had been shattered by the shell, and part of it thrown to some distance from the body. He bore his sufferings without a murmur, and while being carried to the hospital by his men, he exhorted them to do their duty as faithfully as before, and by no means to surrender the fort. Amputation above the knee was immediately effected, but the wound was of so aggravated a nature that he survived but three days. He was succeeded in the command by Captain Hawkins.*

Meanwhile the firing of the Mexicans was unintermittingly sustained ; practice seemed to give precision to their aim, and the ground

* MAJOR J. BROWN, was a native of Vermont, and at the age of twenty-four years entered the American army as a common soldier in the seventh infantry, at the commencement of the war of 1812. He was in nearly all the hard fought battles on the Niagara, where his merit was soon perceived, and won for him an ensign's commission. Before the close of the war he obtained a lieutenancy, and from that rose by regular gradations to the rank of major, in which capacity he served for many years. For some time he filled the office of commissary of subsistence at Council Bluffs, afterwards quartermaster and commissary at St. Louis, and for a while was engaged in conducting the tribes of emigrant Indians to the west. He was also in active service during the whole period of the war in Florida. In giving him the command of the fort opposite Matamoras, General Taylor displayed his sagacity in the knowledge of character and officer-like qualities in a comrade in arms, which perhaps his observation and actual experience helped him to foresee. He found also, that his confidence in the major was not misplaced, and it will ever be a matter of regret that the gallant officer should have fallen before his task was successfully finished, and the laurel placed on his brow. His habits of exact discipline and exact accountability made his services always in request ; and as he possessed the confidence of his superiors, and the good will of those under his command, he was an officer in the proper sense of the term. General Taylor says of him : " The pleasure [*of victory*] is alloyed with profound regret at the loss of the heroic and indomitable Major Brown. His loss would be a severe one to the service at any time, but to the army under my orders, it is indeed irreparable."

within the whole range of the fort presented the appearance of a ploughed field. Late in the afternoon the enemy opened from Matamoras with one mortar, and from the field in the rear with two; and at half-past ten some infantry crept up into a ravine, and discharged some small arms and musketry; but being out of range, their fire was not returned. At ten o'clock next morning Lieutenant Bragg discharged several rounds of canister upon parties of mounted men and infantry, apparently endeavoring to surround his rear. This dispersed them, but elicited in return a shower of shells from the different batteries, which rained without intermission until half-past eleven o'clock.

About four o'clock the Mexicans sounded a parley, and sent to the fort a delegation of two officers, bearing a white flag. They brought a communication from General Arista, of which the following is a translation:

“MEXICAN ARMY, DIVISION OF THE NORTH, }
General-in-Chief. } ”

“You are besieged by forces sufficient to take you; and there is, moreover, a numerous division encamped near you, which free from all other cares, will keep off any succors which you may expect to receive. The respect for humanity acknowledged at the present age by all civilized nations, doubtless imposes upon me the duty of mitigating the disasters of war.

“This principle, which Mexicans observe above all other nations, obliges me to summon you, as all your efforts will be useless, to surrender in order to avoid by a capitulation, the entire destruction of all the soldiers under your command.

“You will thus afford me the pleasure of complying with the mild and benevolent wishes above expressed, which distinguish the character of my countrymen, whilst I, at the same time, fulfil the most imperious of the duties which my country requires for the offences committed against it.

“God and Liberty!

“HEAD-QUARTERS AT THE FAUQUES DEL RAMINERO, *May 6th, 1846.*

M. ARISTA.”

Upon the reception of this document Captain Hawkins convened

a council of his officers, who, upon consultation, unanimously acceded to the following reply :

“HEAD-QUARTERS U. S. FORCES, }
Near Matamoras, *May 6, 1846, 5 P. M.* }

“SIR—Your humane communication has just been received, and after the consideration due to its importance, I must respectfully decline to surrender my forces to you.

“The exact purport of your despatch I cannot feel confident that I understood, as my interpreter is not skilled in your language ; but if I have understood you correctly, you have my reply above.

“I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

“E. S. HAWKINS,

“Commanding U. S. Forces opposite Matamoras.

“GENERAL M. ARISTA, Commanding Division of the North.”

Upon the reception of this reply, the Mexicans re-opened their batteries, and during the remainder of the afternoon and a great part of the night, poured forth a continual shower of bombs, shells and shot. The garrison expected a night assault ; but were disappointed.

The morning of the 7th opened with a heavy cannonading from the city, which now seemed to be the favorite position of the enemy. After a short time the firing ceased, but was again renewed, proceeding languidly until two o'clock, when all the batteries simultaneously burst forth with terrific violence, and continued without intermission until evening. This fire was very annoying to the Americans, destroying tents, sheds, utensils, and many other articles ; and to add to the mortification of the garrison, they were obliged to remain passive spectators in consequence of the scarcity of their ammunition.

At dark, Captain Mansfield, of the engineer corps, was sent with one hundred men to level the traverse, thrown up by General Worth on the Rio Grande, together with some clumps of chapparal, behind both of which the enemy were accustomed to conceal themselves in order to gall the Americans. This he accomplished by midnight, at which time commenced a random fire of musketry, accompanied by a sounding of bugles, which continued until daylight. The garrison felt now certain of being attacked, but they were again disappointed. Before morning all was quiet ; but at sunrise the bombardment was renewed with great energy, continuing with little

intermission until the afternoon. But although nearly three hundred shells and large shot were precipitated into the fort, not a single American was either killed or wounded.

In the afternoon the heavy sound of distant cannon suddenly broke upon the ears of the garrison. It was repeated—there could be no mistake as to its origin. Each soldier started to his feet, and listened with a thrill of breathless anxiety for its return; and at each peal a shout more loud than the Mexican batteries, rolled along the American lines. That sound was the voice of General Taylor at Palo Alto. In the evening a Mexican deserter arrived at the fort with a white flag, and gave an account of the battle. No news could have been more grateful to the wearied garrison; for six days they had scarcely known rest or sleep; but with their beloved commander once more near them, they knew that victory would henceforth be easy.

On the afternoon of the next day the firing was heard from Resaca de la Palma, announcing a re-engagement; and about sunset the besiegers of the fort beat a retreat.

Such were the principal events at Fort Brown* after the departure of General Taylor. In reviewing the conduct of the garrison, we are struck with their indomitable valor and perseverance. Besieged by a far superior force of the enemy, deprived of intercourse with their only means of succor, and limited in food and ammunition, they did not for one moment swerve from their high position as American soldiers. Arista's overtures of capitulation were rejected with scorn, and his assaults sustained with firmness. The defence of Fort Brown will ever be considered a master piece of courage and valor.

We now return to the main army under General Taylor.

The General reached Point Isabel on the 2d of May, without having encountered a single Mexican. The next day he heard the cannonading of Fort Brown, but received no important intelligence until the 4th, when Captain May arrived and reported that he had passed the camp of a heavy Mexican force, stationed on the road to Matamoras.

The situation of the American commander was one of great peril.

* So called by General Taylor in honor of its defender, Major J. Brown.

The number and intentions of the enemy were unknown, as was also the future fate of Fort Brown ; but it was certain that the enemy would use every effort to prevent the junction of his forces. Unappalled, however, by this threatening array, he declared to the army his intention of marching to the relief of the fort ; and orders to that effect were issued on the 7th of May. In the evening the main body, to the amount of two thousand men, accompanied by two hundred and fifty wagons, left Point Isabel and marched about seven miles, where they stopped and passed the night. The next morning they again moved forward until they arrived at a wide level prairie, flanked on both sides by small pools of fresh water. The plain was more than three miles in extent, and beyond it, facing the American army, were extended lines of chapparal, prickly pear, and a species of tree called by the Mexicans Palo Alto. Here a scene thrilling and impressive in character burst upon the American army. The enemy, numbering more than six thousand, were stretched directly across the road in an unbroken line of more than a mile in length.

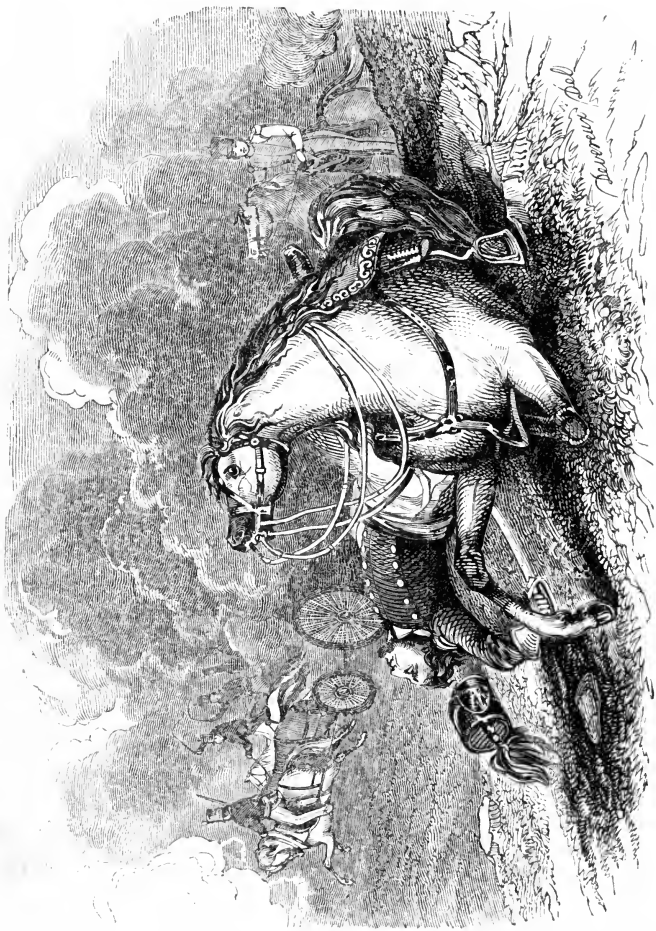
General Taylor now made his dispositions for battle, which were as follows: On the extreme right, Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh with the fifth infantry ; Major Ringgold's artillery ; Captain N. L. Norris and third infantry ; two eighteen pounders, commanded by Lieutenant Churchill of the third artillery ; fourth infantry commanded by Major G. W. Allen ; third brigade, composed of the third and fourth regiments, under Lieutenant-Colonel Garland. These together with two squadrons of dragoons under Captains Ker and May, composed the right wing, under the orders of Colonel Twiggs. The first brigade, composed of Lieutenant-Colonel Child's battalion of artillery, and the eighth infantry under Captain Montgomery, formed the left wing, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Belknap. The train was stationed near the water, under the direction of Captains Crossman and Myers, and protected by Captain Ker's squadron.

At two o'clock the army commenced its march toward the enemy, having been previously ordered to refresh themselves with draughts of cold water from the neighboring pools. While the columns were advancing, Lieutenant Blake of the topographical engineers, having received permission to reconnoitre, galloped forward to within rifle-

shot of the Mexican line, where he dismounted, and with his spy-glass coolly surveyed their forces. Being approached by two of their officers, who were under the impression that he sought a parley, he remounted, rode in a parallel line between the two armies and returned. This handsome conduct was of some use, as it resulted in the discovery of two batteries of artillery between the cavalry and infantry of the enemy.

The Americans continued to advance until the opposing armies were within about a quarter of a mile of each other, when the Mexican batteries on the right opened a heavy fire, and were almost immediately followed by a loud burst from the artillery of the whole line. The advancing columns were now halted, and formed into line, while at the same time the fire of the enemy was answered by Churchill's eighteen pounders, and the artillery of Ringgold and Duncan. The latter had soon to sustain the combined efforts of the Mexicans; and but for the want of precision in their aim, would have been completely annihilated. Every cannon was now in service, and the battle raged with terrific grandeur. At each discharge of Churchill and Ringgold, the cavalry of the enemy was seen to open, announcing the entrance of a messenger of death, and though for a long while each gap was steadily filled up, yet at length the slaughter became so tremendous, that in about two hours after its commencement, they gave ground and collected for a charge.

During all this time the infantry had remained idle spectators; but the moment was arriving when they would be called to take an active part in the engagement. Captain Walker reported that General Torrejon, with a company of lancers and two pieces of artillery, were moving through the chapparal evidently with the design of attacking the train; and the fifth infantry, supported by a part of Ringgold's battery and Walker's volunteers, were ordered to oppose this movement. The lancers, amounting to fifteen hundred, were first met by Ridgely's batteries, and their artillery obliged to retreat. The fifth regiment then opened upon them, and were soon followed by the third infantry, both batteries operating with terrible effect. Unable to stand so tremendous a fire, the lancers broke and fled on all sides, leaving hundreds of their men and horses dead on the field. The battle had now become general, raging with such fury as to en



Death of Major Kinggold.

velope both armies in the smoke of artillery, and even to set on fire the long grass of the prairie.

The firing of the Mexicans now ceased, and for an hour both armies remained quiet. Meanwhile the enemy formed a new line of battle, and the American general ordered forward the eighteen pounders nearly to the position first occupied by the lancers, and caused the first brigade to take up a new position still on the left of the eighteen pounder battery. The fifth infantry was also advanced from its former position, and occupied the ground to the extreme right of the new line.

These changes effected, the battle recommenced with great fury. The artillery of Churchill and Ringgold did even more execution than before; and yet the broken ranks of the enemy were filled up with a promptness and courage which excited the admiration of their antagonists. In order to throw them into confusion, Captain May's squadron was ordered to charge, if possible, the left; but after considerable loss he was obliged to desist from a paucity of troops. Meanwhile the fourth infantry was exposed to a most galling fire of artillery, by which they lost a large number in killed and wounded, and among the latter Captain Page. About the same time, while Major Ringgold was directing one of his pieces, he was mortally wounded by a cannon ball which passed through both his thighs and the body of his horse.*

* Samuel Ringgold was born in Washington county, Maryland, in 1800. His father was General Samuel Ringgold, and his mother a daughter of General John Cadwalader, so renowned in the annals of the American revolution. Young Ringgold was sent to the Military Academy at West Point, in 1814, and was graduated at the head of his class in 1818, having creditably performed the arduous duties and requirements of that institution. He entered the army as lieutenant, and was soon after recommended to General Scott, whose head-quarters were then at Philadelphia. Being satisfied with his merit, as well as somewhat acquainted with his family, the general immediately selected him for one of his aids, and he repaired to head-quarters and joined the staff, in which he remained for nearly three years. During that time he enjoyed the respect and confidence of his superior, and profited greatly by the instruction he received under so accomplished a soldier. He possessed qualities of heart and mind which endeared him to his associates and superiors, and was one of the few who may be said to have no enemies, although belonging to a profession so eminently calculated to engender envy and rivalry.

Upon leaving the staff he entered active service, doubly qualified by the advantages he had enjoyed, and the close application he had pursued while in this honorable position. He was attached to the third regiment as lieutenant

During these movements, Lieutenant-Colonel Childs's artillery had been brought up to support the artillery on the right. As the cavalry of the enemy were now advancing, notwithstanding a severe cannon-

by brevet, and in July 1822, he was promoted to first lieutenant in the place of Samuel Spotts, who had been raised to captain.

In 1831, he accompanied his command to Fort Moultrie, S. C., where he remained until the difficulties occasioned by the "nullification" question were ended. In July of the following year, 1834, he received the rank of captain by brevet, to date from May 8th, 1832. In August 1836, he was promoted to captain, and assigned company C, third artillery. In the latter part of the same month he was sent, with his command, to Savannah, Ga., in order to garrison the fort at that place; and shortly after he was commanded to Florida, where he served through the greater part of the war, to the great injury of his health. The rank of major by brevet was conferred upon him for his "meritorious services" in that territory.

By orders of November 5th, 1838, his company was disbanded, and he was instructed to proceed to Carlisle, Pa., and organize and equip a company of light artillery. This was in conformity with an act of 1831, to "authorize the mounting and equipment of a part of the army of the United States," the men to be entailed from the first and second artillery, and to be dropped from the rolls of their respective companies, and mustered as company C of third regiment. The major's former company, then in the field, was broken up, and the men transferred to other companies of the regiment, the subalterns only joining the company of Carlisle.

Major Ringgold now applied himself diligently to perfecting the discipline in this arm of the military service. His efforts were highly successful, and mainly through his instrumentality and that of Captain Duncan, the flying artillery has become the most important military branch in service. Though, perhaps, never thoroughly tested until on the plains of the Rio Grande, yet the great share it there contributed toward a successful result, has distinguished it as one so valuable, as to demand the serious attention of the government in order perfectly to organize and extend it. The performances of the flying artillery in an engagement are of the most ingenious character, and the effects of the battery the most destructive to an enemy. The necessary arms are the sword, pistol, and cannon, the latter used almost as expertly as the former. "They advance rapidly, halt with astonishing suddenness, dismount, separate their cannon from the carriages, replace them, mount, and start off again. At a certain signal after the firing, they instantly drop; while the enemy, supposing them disabled, venture too near, and in an instant are completely surprised, and are shot down before they can collect themselves."

Major Ringgold was ordered from Fort McHenry to Texas with the "army of observation." When General Taylor left Point Isabel on the 7th of May, the major, with his regiment, occupied a position near the vanguard. At Palo Alto the Mexicans opened their batteries on the right, half a mile from the American line, and were answered by two eighteen-pounders in charge of Lieutenant Churchill. Ringgold took position to the right and front of the eighteen pounders, at a distance of seven hundred yards from the enemy (subsequently advancing one hundred yards) and opened his battery with tremendous effect. He pointed the guns with his own hand, and with unerring precision, directing the shot not only to groups and masses of the enemy, but to particular individuals. He saw

ade, the battalion of artillery was formed into square, in order to receive their charge; but when the advanced squadrons were within close range, a fire of canister from the eighteen pounders, dispersed

them fall in numbers; their places occupied by others, who in their turn were shot down, and he declared that "he felt as confident of hitting his mark as though he had been using a rifle." During all this time the infantry were formed as a support in his rear, and cheered rapturously the brilliant movements and destructive execution of his battery.

At length a regiment of the enemy's lancers were seen to make a demonstration toward the right, apparently to gain possession of the wagon train. Lieutenant Ridgely was detached with two pieces to check them, leaving the major with but a small number of men. He continued, however, to play upon the enemy with his two remaining pieces, advancing, retrograding, or shifting his position, according to the nature of the action, for three hours, when he was shot through both thighs by a six-pound ball. He was mounted at the time, and the ball came from the right, passing through his right thigh, about midway, at right angles through the holsters, tore away the front part of the saddle and the horse's shoulders, and passed into the major's left thigh. An officer ran to his aid, but the major exclaimed—"Don't stay with me: you have work to do—go ahead." He was conveyed to his camp under charge of Dr. Byrne, placed in comfortable quarters, and his wounds dressed. A great quantity of muscles and integuments were carried away from both thighs, and yet the arteries were not divided, nor the bones broken. Dr. Foltz, surgeon of the United States army, remained with him during the night. He had but little pain, and at intervals slept. He continued to grow worse through the 9th, but conversed cheerfully upon the incidents of the battle, constantly adverting to the efficiency of his guns, and the brave conduct of his officers and men. He died at one o'clock on the morning of the 10th of May, and was buried on the next day with military honors, lamented by the whole camp.

"He was an accomplished gentleman, beloved by his friends, and respected by all. He was devoted to his profession, and justly appreciated the high responsibilities of an officer in command. He rigidly enforced discipline at all times, and in all things; and yet, probably, no officer had more entirely the respect, the confidence, and the affectionate regard of all his officers and men."

The Philadelphia North American thus speaks of his death:—

"The death of this accomplished officer is a heavy loss to the country. He had been entrusted with the revision of a system of tactics for our army, and devoted much time and study to improving upon the English and French systems. His corps was as fine a one as any service could boast. He leaves unfinished we think, a work which he was preparing on the utility and practicability of the flying artillery arm in service. Major Ringgold's constitution was much impaired by his long campaigns in Florida, but passionately attached to the profession of arms, he still remained in the army, and died a martyr to his country.

"His death has stricken thousands of hearts, that gush under the blow with feelings which no ordinary public calamity could have excited. He was generally known and appreciated in this city as the Bayard of the age—the star of the war; and his career was watched with anxious eyes and hearts. That it would be glorious no one doubted; but who thought that an orb so bright would sink so early? The soul of chivalry and honor, accomplished as a soldier, lofty

them. The fire of the enemy now ceased, and with it the action on the right of the American line.

Meanwhile the enemy had made a serious attack against the left. Their movements were for a while concealed by the smoke of the burning plain; but this having dispersed, Captain Duncan discovered and communicated to Lieutenant Belknap the fact, that the enemy were moving the entire cavalry and infantry of their right wing upon the train in rear of the American left. He was ordered to proceed to the threatened point immediately, and hold the enemy in check, until the eighth infantry could come to his support. He rapidly advanced in full view of the enemy, moving so unexpectedly that they were compelled to halt, before a shot had been fired or a gun unlimbered, and engaged them within range of their small guns.

A strong body of the enemy's infantry, supported by two squadrons of cavalry, now issued from the extreme right point of the chapparal, and moved forward to an attack. They were driven back by a discharge of shells and round shot from a part of the battery, the other part in the meanwhile playing upon the cavalry, which had halted in front of the guns. Their broken column rallied and returned to the attack, but were again repulsed in greater disorder than before. At the same moment the cavalry which had hitherto maintained their ground, rushed back upon the advance columns, communicating a panic from squadron to squadron, until their entire right wing was in full retreat. The artillery continued its fire until the enemy had gained the chapparal, when darkness put an end to the battle.

The force of each army in this battle, together with the killed and wounded and other incidental matter, will be gathered from the despatches of the two commanders which we insert.

as a patriot, beloved as a man, it demands an agonizing struggle to reconcile us to such a sacrifice. And yet it is a noble one. In the flash of his fame he has died, as he lived—for his country. The offering was doubtless a glad one. He desired no better fate than such a death; he could leave no richer inheritance than such an example. While we feel as if destiny had robbed the future of the fame which such a nature must have won, we dare not repine that his career has been closed in its morning with this sunburst of glory. His memory will be gratefully cherished so long as honor has a victory, freedom a hero, or his country a name."

HEAD QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }
Camp at Palo Alto, Texas, May 9th, 1846. }

SIR: I have the honor to report that I was met near this place yesterday, on my march from Point Isabel, by the Mexican forces, and after an action of about five hours, dislodged them from their position and encamped upon the field. Our artillery, consisting of two eighteen pounders and two light batteries, was the arm chiefly engaged, and to the excellent manner in which it was manœuvred and served, is our success mainly due.

The strength of the enemy is believed to have been about six thousand men with seven pieces of artillery and eight hundred cavalry. His loss is probably at least one hundred killed. Our strength did not exceed, all told, twenty-three hundred men, while our loss was comparatively trifling—four men killed, three officers and thirty-seven men wounded, several of the latter mortally. I regret to say that Major Ringgold, third artillery, and Captain Page, fourth infantry, are severely wounded; Lieutenant Luther, second artillery, slightly so.

The enemy has fallen back, and it is believed has repassed the river. I have advanced parties now thrown forward in his direction, and shall move the main body immediately.

In the haste of this first report, I can only say, that the officers and men behaved in the most admirable manner throughout the action. I shall have the pleasure of making a more detailed report, when those of the different commanders shall be received.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Brevet Brig. Gen. U. S. A. Commanding.

The ADJUTANT-GENERAL U. S. Army.

Washington D. C.

The exact force of General Taylor was 177 officers and 2111 men. The Mexicans amounted to more than six thousand, and it is probable that their loss was far greater than is stated in the following despatch :—

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF

MOST EXCELLENT SIR: Constant in my purpose of preventing General Taylor from uniting the forces which he brought from the Fronon of Santa Isabel with those which he left fortified opposite

Matamoras, I moved this day from the Fauques del Raminero, whence I despatched my last extraordinary courier, and took the direction of Palo Alto, as soon as my spies informed me that the enemy had left Fronton, with the determination of introducing into his fort, wagons loaded with provisions and heavy artillery.

I arrived opposite Palo Alto about one o'clock, and observed that the enemy were entering that position.

With all my forces I established the line of battle in a great plain, my right resting upon an elevation, and my left on a slough of difficult passage.

Scarcely was the first cannon fired when there arrived General Pedro de Ampudia, second in command, whom I had ordered to join me after having covered the points which might serve to besiege the enemy in the forts opposite Matamoras.

The forces under my orders amounted to 3000 men, and twelve pieces of artillery; those of the invaders were 3000, rather less than more, and were superior in artillery, since they had twenty pieces of the calibre of sixteen and eighteen pounders.

The battle commenced so ardently that the fire of the cannon did not cease a single moment. In the course of it the enemy wished to follow the road towards Matamoras, to raise the siege of his troops; with which object he fired the grass, and formed in front of his line of battle a smoke so thick, that he succeeded in covering himself from our view, but by means of manœuvres this was twice embarrassed.

General Taylor maintained his attack rather defensively than offensively, employing his best arm which is artillery, protected by half of the infantry, and all of his cavalry,—keeping the remainder fortified in the ravine, about two thousand yards from the field of battle.

I was anxious for the charge because the fire of cannon did much damage in our ranks, and I instructed General D. Anastosia Torrejon to execute it with the greater part of the cavalry, by our left flank, while one should be executed at the same time by our right flank, with some columns of infantry and the remainder of that arm (cavalry).

I was waiting the moment when that general should execute the charge, and the effect of it should begin to be seen in order to give

the impulse on the right, but he was checked by a fire of the enemy which defended a slough that embarrassed the attack.

Some battalions becoming impatient by the loss which they suffered, fell into disorder, demanding to advance or fall back. I immediately caused them to charge with a column of cavalry under the command of Colonel D. Cayetano Montero; the result of this operation being that the dispersed corps repaired their fault as far as possible, marching towards the enemy, who in consequence of his distance was enabled to fall back upon his reserve, and night coming on the battle was concluded—the field remaining for our arms.

Every suitable measure was then adopted, and the division took up a more concentrated curve in the same scene of action.

The combat was long and bloody, which may be estimated from the calculations made by the commandant general of artillery, General D. Thomas Requena, who assures me that the enemy threw about three thousand cannon shots from two in the afternoon, when the battle commenced, until seven at night when it terminated—six hundred and fifty being fired on our side.

The national arms shone forth, since they did not yield a hand's breadth of ground, notwithstanding the superiority in artillery of the enemy, who suffered much damage.

Our troops have to lament the loss of two hundred and fifty two men, dispersed, wounded and killed,—the last worthy of national recollection and gratitude for the intrepidity with which they died fighting for the most sacred of causes.

Will your excellency please with this note, to report to his excellency the President, representing to him that I will take care to give a circumstantial account of this deed of arms; and recommending to him the good conduct of all the generals, chief officers and soldiers under my orders, for sustaining so bloody a combat, which does honor to our arms and exhibits their discipline.

Accept the assurances of my consideration and great regard.

God and Liberty!

HEAD QUARTERS PALO ALTO, *in sight of the enemy*, May 8, 1846.

MARIANO ARISTA.

MOST EXCELLENT SIR, Minister of War and Marine.

The battle of Palo Alto will long be remembered as one of the

most brilliant in the annals of the republic. General Taylor advanced to it, with a force greatly inferior to that of the enemy, which with the usual mendacity of the Mexican officers is stated at only three thousand in the foregoing despatch. The confidence of the American commander in the efficiency of his troops, was so great that he advanced at a moment when twelve hours delay would have brought him a powerful reinforcement ; and he declared previous to his march that he should give battle to the enemy in whatever force he might appear. The result gloriously justified this generous confidence of the brave commander.



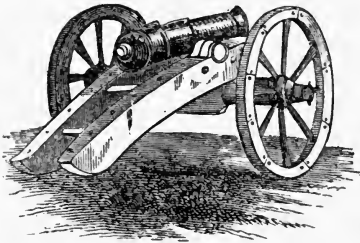
Lieutenant Blake reconnoitering at Palo Alto.



General Arista.

CHAPTER V.

Battle of Resaca de la Palma.



THE Battle of Palo Alto was the prelude to that of Resaca de la Palma. On the evening of the 8th, General Taylor held a council of officers to decide upon the propriety of advancing toward Fort Brown. Though it was very evident that the enemy would oppose such a movement with all the determination of a final struggle, yet the council cheerfully resolved to advance.

Early on the following morning the army recommenced its march toward the Rio Grande. At the same time the Mexicans were observed moving from the ground occupied by them during the night, and silently winding toward the chapparal on their front and flank. Observing this, General Taylor, having ordered the supply train to be strongly parked, and sending his wounded men to Point Isabel, moved forward seven miles to the edge of the thicket, which extends to the Rio Grande. At the same time the command of Captain McCall, fourth infantry, consisting of the light companies of the first brigade, under Captain Smith, Captain Walker with his Texan Rangers, a detachment of artillery and infantry under Captain McCall, and troop of Indiana dragoons under Lieutenant Pleasanton, in all two hundred and twenty men, were ordered forward into the chapparal, in order to ascertain the exact position of the enemy.

At the departure of this detachment the main army halted, and the General accompanied by his staff, rode toward the train for the purpose of ascertaining its condition. One of his attendants was Lieutenant Blake, the same officer who had elicited so much admiration, by his courageous reconnoitre on the preceding day. Being excessively fatigued, he alighted from his horse, and after remarking upon his gratification at the anticipation of rest, he threw his sword, to which his pistols were attached, upon the ground. The concussion caused one of them to explode, its ball glancing upward, entering his thigh and penetrating to the lungs. He died in three hours, regretting that he had not received the wound in the battle of the previous day.

The detachment of Captain Smith were now moving on the right of the road, while McCall with his artillery and infantry advanced on the left. The whole command soon entered the chapparal, when Captain Walker with his company and a small party of mounted men was ordered to examine the road in front, while Lieutenant Pleasanton with the dragoons, marched in the rear of the columns of infantry. They advanced three miles without encountering any but small straggling parties, one of whom, Captain Walker charged, killing one man and capturing another.

After having crossed a prairie and examined the opposite side, Walker reported the road clear. Desiring, however, to obtain

definite information as to the position of the enemy, McCall pushed him forward into the chapparal, where a few parties, consisting of from three to six persons each, were observed among the bushes, and one on horseback, was fired upon by the flankers. On reaching the open ground at Resaca de la Palma, the head of Captain McCall's column received three rounds of canister shot from a masked battery, which killed one private and wounded two sergeants. This obliged them to retire under cover, but they soon afterwards rallied, at the distance of about fifty paces. Captain Smith's detachment was now brought to the left of the road, in order to attack by flank movement, what was supposed to be the rear guard of the enemy. Being now satisfied that the Mexican army was in full force on his front, McCall despatched three dragoons to inform General Taylor of the fact, and then moved his command to a stronger position.

In choosing their ground for this second battle, the enemy had evinced considerable ingenuity. The road there crosses a ravine four or five feet deep, whose sides and edges are densely matted with extended lines of chapparal. Along these lines the enemy had stationed themselves, placing their artillery in such positions within the ravine, as completely to sweep, by cross firing, the narrowest portion of the road.

Upon the reception of Captain McCall's message, the American commander immediately put his army in motion, and came up with the advance about four o'clock in the afternoon. Ridgely's* battery

* RANDOLPH RIDGELY is the son of General Charles S. Ridgely, of Elkridge, Ann Arundel county, Maryland. He belongs to the third artillery, and in the battle of the 9th did most valuable service with the light artillery battery previously commanded by Ringgold. The manner in which he took the battery into action at the commencement of that battle, and the skill and bravery with which he managed it, raised him high in the estimation of the army.

At the commencement of the action on the 8th, after having advanced to within six hundred yards of the enemy's lines, and opening his battery with dreadful execution, Lieutenant Ridgely was detached from Major Ringgold with a section consisting of two pieces, to operate with the fifth infantry, which had been sent forward to oppose a flank movement of the enemy making on the right of the Americans. He had already lost one man and two horses, yet upon taking his position on the right of the fifth, who were formed in square, he at once unlimbered and commenced firing. The effect of his fire was tremendous, and he very shortly saw the enemy's artillery and cavalry, which was in large force, retiring, and the grand movement of the enemy was frustrated.

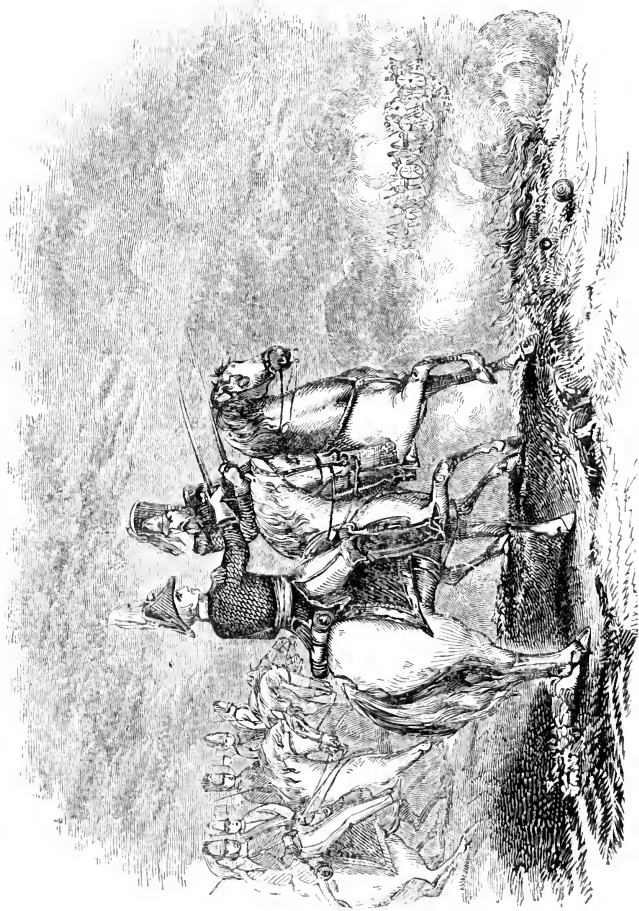
On the 9th, the Americans opened by Ridgely's battery. He was highly

and the advance under McCall were now sent forward to occupy the road and chapparal on either side. The 5th infantry and one wing of the 4th was thrown into the forest on the left, and the 3d and other wing of the 4th, on the right of the road. These corps were employed as skirmishers to cover the battery, and engage the Mexican infantry.

Lieutenant Ridgely being now in front with his light artillery, Captain Walker was sent to assist him in discovering the enemy. After moving very cautiously for some time, Ridgely discovered the Mexicans in the road, about four hundred yards before him. He moved rapidly in front to the distance of about one hundred yards, and returned their fire. The 5th regiment advanced with loud cheers to his support, and the action became spirited, the grape shot of the enemy passing through the American battery in every direction. Soon as this subsided, Ridgely moved forward, frequently discharging canister at the distance of not more than one hundred and fifty yards. At the same time the infantry of Captain McCall arrived, and, supported by the 4th infantry under Colonel McIntosh, and the 3d, 4th, and 8th regiments under Morris, Allen, and Montgomery, together with Duncan's battery, opened upon the enemy. The battle now became general, and raged with such fury, that though the artillery on both sides was doing terrible execution, neither army seemed disposed to yield an inch of ground.

Observing the strong position of the enemy's batteries, General Taylor ordered May to charge them with his dragoons. This perilous undertaking was most fearlessly conducted. Riding in front of his eager horsemen, the captain ordered them to "follow," and the next moment they were rushing down upon the Mexican guns. The enemy reserved their fire until the horses were almost upon their cannon, and then poured forth a volley which killed eighteen horses and eight men, among whom was Lieutenant Inge. The remainder bore on, overleaped the batteries, and seized the guns; but almost at the same moment the enemy rallied, and returned

serviceable to Captain May, in drawing the fire of the Mexican artillery previous to the charge of that officer, and without which, it is very probable that the American cavalry would have been almost annihilated. His fame as an active and successful officer is now high, and he has lately been appointed assistant adjutant-general, with the rank of captain.



General Taylor ordering Captain May to charge the Mexican Battery

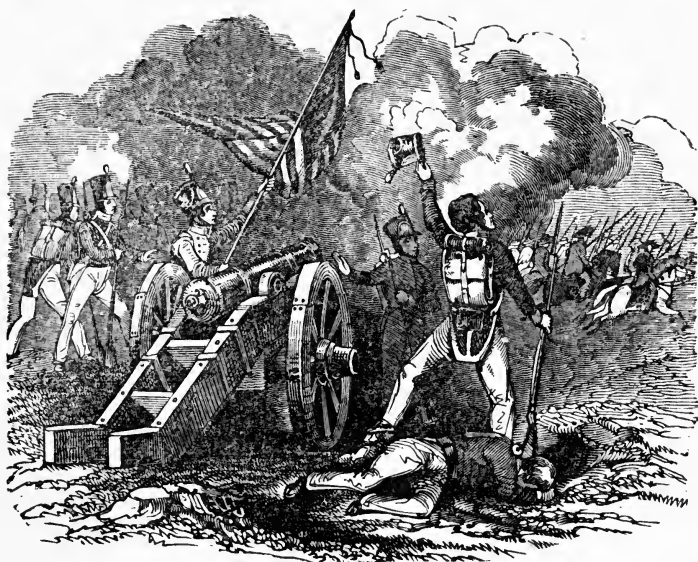
to the attack with fixed bayonets. They were again repulsed, with the loss of General la Vega, who was captured by May while in the act of discharging a cannon. The "Tampico veterans" now rushed on to the recovery of their guns, and being met by the 5th regiment, and a large body of infantry, a conflict commenced hand to hand, in which both parties fought with the most determined courage, notwithstanding their heavy losses. But seventeen of these brave veterans escaped, the rest falling sword in hand at their positions.

A part of the 5th infantry under Colonel McIntosh now charged across the enemy's station, carrying one of his centre batteries, and with the 3d and 4th infantry, put to rout his left wing. In this affair the colonel was mortally wounded by a detachment of cavalry, whose whole charge he received personally. His command devolved upon Major Staniford.

Meanwhile Captain Marcy had turned the enemy's left flank, and captured a piece of artillery. They were now pouring a heavy fire from a small breastwork containing about one hundred and fifty men and a cannon. Captain Buchanan was ordered to charge this defence, which he did with thirty men, capturing the piece, and bearing it to a place of safety. A second breastwork which had considerably annoyed his rear he also attacked with ten men, driving its garrison across the road.

The 4th regiment, after taking the battery, pushed forward until it emerged from the thicket into the main camp of the enemy, containing General Arista's head-quarters, private property, and camp equipage, together with vast stores of baggage, provisions, ammunition, and some four hundred mules, all of which fell into the hands of the Americans. The conquerors were obliged to lament the loss of Lieutenant Cochrane, who, while gallantly leading his men into the camp, fell at its very edge.

The artillery battalion was now ordered to pursue the enemy, and with the 3d infantry, Captain Ker's dragoons, and Duncan's battery, followed them rapidly to the river, making a number of prisoners. The fugitives rushed headlong into the flat-boats, from which many of them were pushed into the water by the cavalry and lancers. Numbers were drowned, and the shore and boats presented



Duncan's battery at Resaca de la Palma.

a scene of confusion and distress, heightened by the loud tramping of flying horsemen, and the cries of the drowning. The pursuers encamped on the bank, and the main body of their army on the field of battle.

The force of the Americans in this battle, together with other interesting matter not given in our description, will be gathered from the detailed report of General Taylor, which we insert, omitting such portions as would occasion but a needless repetition.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }
Camp near Fort Brown, Texas, May 17th, 1846. }

SIR:—In submitting a more minute report of the affair of 'Resaca de la Palma,' I have the honor to state, that early on the morning of the 9th instant, the enemy, who had encamped near the field of the day previous, was discovered moving by his left flank, perhaps to gain a new position on the road to Matamoras, and there again resist our advance.

I ordered the supply train to be strongly parked at its position, and left with it four pieces of artillery—the two eighteen pounders

which had done such good service on the preceding day, and two twelve pounders which had not been in the action. The wounded officers and men were at the same time sent back to Point Isabel. * * * *

Captain McCall's command became at once engaged with the enemy, while the light artillery, though in a very exposed position, did great execution. The enemy had at least eight pieces of artillery, and maintained an incessant fire upon our advance. * * * * * The enemy was at last completely driven from his position on the right of the road, and retreated precipitately, leaving baggage of every description. The fourth infantry took possession of a camp where the head-quarters of the Mexican general-in-chief were established. All his official correspondence was captured at this place.

The strength of our marching force on this day was one hundred and seventy-three officers, and 2093 men—aggregate 2222. The actual number engaged with the enemy did not exceed 1700. Our loss was three officers killed, thirty-six men killed, and seventy-one wounded. Among the officers killed I have to report the loss of Lieutenant Inge, second dragoons, who fell at the head of his platoon while gallantly charging the enemy's battery; of Lieutenant Cochrane of the fourth, and Lieutenant Chadbourne of the eighth infantry, who likewise met their death in the thickest of the fight. The officers wounded were Lieutenant-Colonel Payne, inspector-general; Lieutenant Dobbins, third infantry, serving with the light infantry advance, slightly; Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh, fifth infantry, severely, twice; Captain Hooe, fifth infantry, severely, (right arm since amputated;) Lieutenant Fowler, fifth infantry, slightly; Captain Montgomery, eighth infantry, slightly; Lieutenants Gates and Jordan, eighth infantry, severely, (each twice;) Lieutenants Selden, Maclay, Burbank, and Morris, eighth infantry, slightly.

I have no accurate data from which to estimate the enemy's force on this day. He is known to have been reinforced after the action of the 8th, both by cavalry and infantry, and no doubt to an extent equal to his loss on that day. It is probable that six thousand men were opposed to us, and in a position chosen by themselves, and strongly defended with artillery. The enemy's loss was very great. Nearly two hundred of his dead were buried by us on the days succeeding the battle. His loss in killed and wounded and

missing in the two affairs of the 8th and 9th is, I think, moderately estimated at one thousand men.

Our victory has been decisive. A small force has overcome immense odds of the best troops that Mexico can furnish—veteran regiments, perfectly equipped and appointed. Eight pieces of artillery, several colors and standards, a great number of prisoners, including fourteen officers, and a large amount of baggage and public property have fallen into our hands. * * * * * I take this occasion to mention generally the devotion to duty of the medical staff of the army, who have been untiring in their exertions both in the field and in the hospitals, to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded of both armies. * * * * *

One regimental color (battalion of Tampico) and many standards and guidons of cavalry were taken at the affair of the 9th: I would be pleased to receive your instructions as to the disposition to be made of these trophies; whether they shall be sent to Washington, &c.* I am very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Brevet Brigadier General, U. S. A. Commanding.
The ADJUTANT GENERAL of the Army,
Washington, D. C.

Captain May's charge, one of the most brilliant movements of that eventful day, is thus described by Sergeant Milton, who shared its dangers:

"Our troops stood anxiously waiting for the signal to be given, and never had I looked upon men, upon whose countenances was more clearly expressed a fixed determination to win. The lips of some were pale with excitement, and their eyes wore that fixed expression which betokens mischief; others with shut teeth would quietly laugh and catch a tighter grip of the rein, or seat themselves with care and firmness in the saddle, while quiet words of confidence and encouragement were passed from each to his neighbor. All at once Captain May rode to the front of his troop—every rein and sabre was tightly grasped. Raising himself and pointing at the battery, he shouted, '*Men, follow!*' There was now a clattering of hoofs and a rattling of sabre sheaths—the fire of the enemy's

* These trophies are now in the office of the War Department at Washington. The regimental color is of embroidered silk.

guns was partly drawn by Lieutenant Ridgely, and the next moment we were sweeping like the wind up the ravine. I was in a squad of about nine men, who were separated by a shower of grape from the battery, and we were in advance, May leading. He turned his horse opposite to the breast work in front of the guns, and with another shout 'to follow,' leaped over them."

Nothing could exceed the exultation of the defenders of Fort Brown, on learning the triumph of General Taylor. As the advance columns of the American army emerged from the surrounding thickets in pursuit of the fugitives, the air rang with welcoming shouts that actually drowned the noise of artillery; and for the first night since the 1st of May, they felt that they were perfectly secure.

On the following day an exchange of prisoners took place, when the army recovered, among others, Captain Thornton, and dismissed the enemy on parole. General la Vega voluntarily remained, declaring that his army would not permit him to remain neutral in Mexico.

On the morning of the 11th, General Taylor left Fort Brown for Point Isabel; and after an interview with Commodore Conner,* commander of the American Gulf squadron, in which they

* This interview is thus humorously described by the *New Orleans Tropic*, of July 25th, 1846.—"The singular simplicity that marks Gen. Taylor's personal appearance and habits, have become a subject of universal fame. It is curious that a soldier, so eminent in all the qualities of discipline, should be so citizen-looking in his own appearance. A curious scene occurred at Point Isabel, at the time Com. Conner appeared off that place with his fleet, to give succor to the "Army of Occupation." Com. Conner is a naval officer that is not only strict in his dress, but has a Philadelphia nicety about it. He appears in full and splendid uniform on all public occasions, being the exact counterpart in this particular of Gen. Taylor.

At the proper time, Com. Conner sent word to Gen. Taylor, that he would come ashore to pay him a visit of ceremony. This put old "Rough and Ready" into a tremendous excitement. If Com. Conner had quietly come up to his tent, and given him a sailor's grip, and sat down on a camp chest, and talked over matters in an old-fashioned way, Gen. Taylor would have been prepared; but to have the most carefully dressed officer in our Navy, commanding the finest fleet, to come in full uniform, surrounded by all the glittering pomp of splendid equipments—to pay a visit of ceremony, was more than Gen. Taylor had, without some effort, nerve to go through with; but, ever equal to emergencies, he determined to compliment Com. Conner, and through him the Navy, *by appearing in full uniform*, a thing his officers associated with him for years, had never witnessed.

concerted plans of co-operation, he set out on the 13th, on his return. On his way he received intelligence that a large body of the enemy had reached Matamoras, with the intention of collecting in force at Barita, a neighboring village. In consequence of this news he changed his plan and returned to Point Isabel; at this place he was greeted with the sight of a considerable reinforcement of Louisiana and Alabama troops, both regular and volunteer, who had just arrived directly from New Orleans. This accession of strength enabled him to draw from that station a much larger force than he had at first intended; so that on the 14th, when he again set out for Fort Brown, he was accompanied by six hundred men, a train of artillery, nearly three hundred wagons, and a large amount of equipage and military stores. He reached his camp without any molestation from the enemy.

On the afternoon of the next day Colonel Wilson, with four companies of regulars and three of volunteers, crossed the river and took undisputed possession of the reported depot at Barita. The property and rights of the citizens were respected, and the station soon became one of importance to the army.

The battle of Resaca de la Palma closed the purely defensive operations of General Taylor; and in his subsequent proceedings, he was operating entirely in the enemy's country, and on the offensive. After the victory the relative disposition of both armies was

In the meanwhile Com. Conner was cogitating over the most proper way to compliment Gen. Taylor. Having heard of his peculiar disregard of military dress, he concluded he would make the visit in a manner comporting to Gen. Taylor's habits, and consequently equipped himself in plain white drilling, and unattended, came ashore.

The moment old "Rough and Ready" heard that Com. Conner had landed, he abandoned some heavy work he was personally attending to about the camp, and precipitately rushed into his tent, delved at the bottom of an old chest, and pulled out a uniform coat, that had peacefully slumbered for years in undisturbed quietude, slipped himself into it, in his haste fastening it so that one side of the standing collar was three button-holes above the other, and sat himself down as uncomfortable as can well be imagined. With quiet step and unattended, Com. Conner presented himself at Gen. Taylor's tent; the two soldiers shook hands, both in exceeding astonishment at each other's personal appearance.

The wags in the army say, that the above contains the only authentic account where Gen. Taylor was ever headed, and since that time, he has taken to linen roundabouts of the largest dimensions, with more pertinacity than ever."

changed, and the Mexicans no longer thought of resisting the victorious General in an open field. In the subsequent chapters, therefore, we must no longer look for the Americans, besieged in a breastwork, and restricted from every thing, except an active defence ; but we shall follow them in rapid marches across the territory, overthrowing all opposition, and capturing the towns and fortifications which obstructed their progress.

The battles of the 8th and 9th of May were of immense importance, not only on account of their accomplishing the relief of Fort Brown, and the expulsion of the enemy from the territory of the United States ; but from their moral effect on both nations. To the enemy these battles were a sad warning of the future, a foretaste of defeat. To our own countrymen they gave the presage of success, the undoubting confidence which was destined to be justified by their subsequent career of victory and conquest.

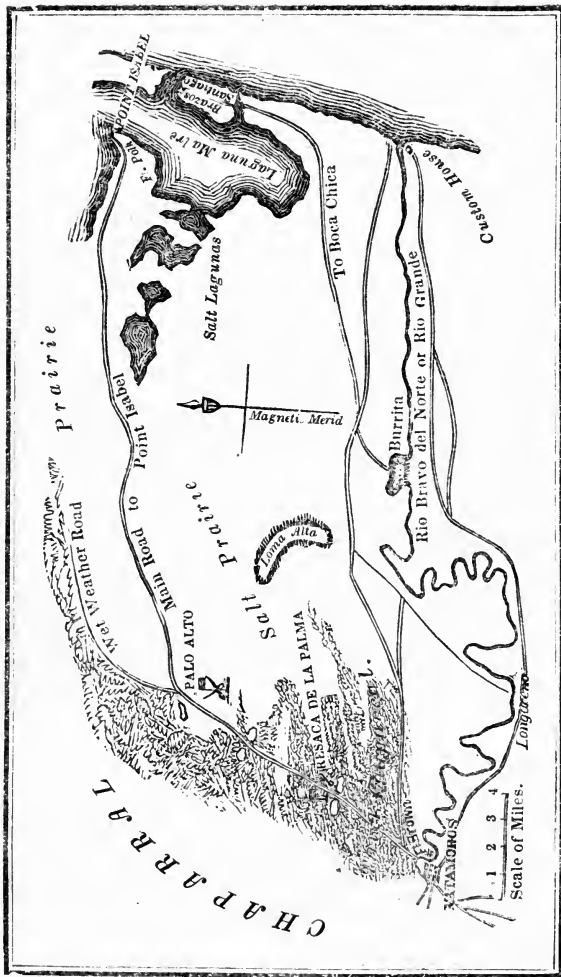


DIAGRAM

of the Battle Grounds of

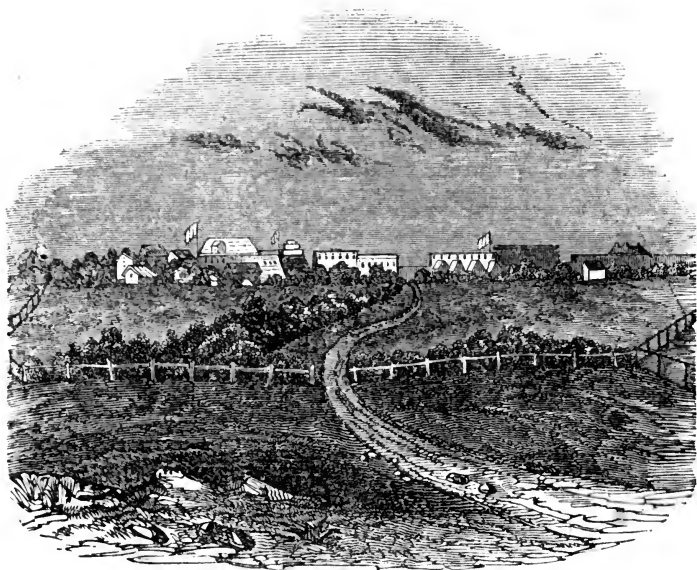
PALO ALTO AND RESACA DE LA PALMA.

Fought on the 8th and 9th of May, 1846,





W. J. Worth



City of Matamoras.

CHAPTER VI.

Capture of Matamoras.



THE want of the necessary means of transportation prevented General Taylor from pursuing his victory of the 9th, by an attack upon Matamoras. Upon arriving however from Point Isabel, he made every exertion in order to enable his army to cross the river ; and he was so far successful as in a few days to be prepared for the proposed crossing.

Matamoras is built in the old Spanish style of architecture, and though its ancient grandeur has much decayed, it is still one of the largest

cities of northern Mexico. Besides cathedrals and other public buildings, it is ornamented with an extensive "Plaza" or public square, regularly laid out and situated in the centre of the city. A correspondent of the New Orleans Bee, and member of the army, thus describes the general appearance of its buildings.

"Matamoras is a much handsomer place than I expected to find it. It covers two miles square, though by no means as compact as an American city—every house except those around the public square, having a large garden attached. The houses in the business part of the town are built after the American fashion, though seldom exceeding two stories in height. All the windows to these buildings are grated from top to bottom with iron bars, and half of the door opens only for admittance, which gives them the appearance of prisons more than business houses. The public square is in the centre of the town, and must have been laid off by an American or European, for the Mexicans never could have laid it out with such beauty and precision. On the four sides of the square, the houses are built close together, as in block, and are all of the same size and height, with the exception of the cathedral, which, though unfinished, still towers above the others. In these houses are sold dry goods, groceries and every kind of wares, with now and then an exchange or coffee house. They are principally occupied by Europeans, and you can hear French, English, Spanish and German spoken at the same time. After leaving the public square, on either side, the houses decrease in size and beauty for two or three squares, when the small reed and thatched huts commence, and continue to the extreme limits of the place."

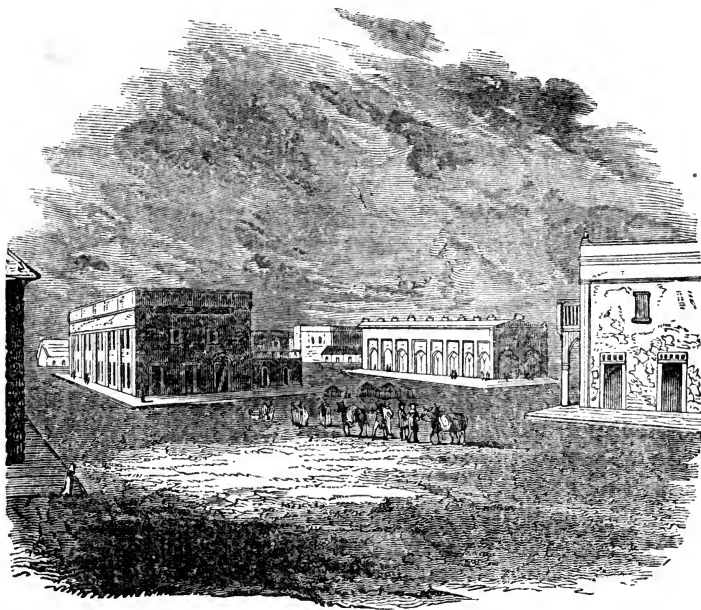
After the battle of the 9th, the city swarmed with robbers and desperadoes of every kind. All military and civil law being at an end, in consequence of the defeat of Arista, they united in bands, broke open houses, robbed and murdered the inhabitants, and filled every square with distress and terror. Besides this, hundreds of the wounded and dying were stowed into the houses, and many left there to perish. The situation of these poor creatures is thus vividly described by the above writer.

"In walking through the streets, my attention was attracted to a house, in the door of which stood or leaned two half naked Mexicans,

so wo-begone as to cause me to halt. On my nearing the door a most disagreeable stench almost induced me to turn, but I mustered courage to enter the door. On the floor, lying upon mats without covering, were near fifty Mexicans, wounded in the late engagements, attended by some ten or twelve women. The smell of the place was insufferable, and I had to leave it. The next door was the same, and so on for about twenty houses. A friend of mine called my attention to a room in which there were at least forty of these miserable objects; and this room was scarcely twelve feet square. There was not positively room for the nurses to attend them. Some had lost a leg, others an arm, and some both legs and arms. I noticed one who will certainly get well, whose legs were shot off within two or three inches above the knee, and he seemed to me to have a greater flow of spirits than some who had only flesh wounds. I said to him, that had his wounds been made by a Mexican shot, he would have been dead; to which he replied, the American shot was very good—no poisonous copper in them. One had died just before I entered the room, and they were making preparations to carry him out. He had been shot in the mouth by a rifle ball, which passed under the left ear, and had lived from the 9th, up to this time. There are between three hundred and fifty and four hundred of these horrid objects in this place, and a sight of them would induce many a stout heart to lament the horrors of war. These men give the number of killed and wounded on the 9th much greater than the Americans ever claimed—some say twelve hundred, and some fifteen hundred."

Having completed his preparations for an attack, General Taylor, on the 16th, ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson to make a digression on the side of Barita, while the main body crossed above the town. Early on the 17th, orders to march had been issued, and Colonel Twiggs was about to cross, when the American commander was waited upon by General Requena, who had been empowered by Arista to treat for an armistice, which should last until both governments should settle the subject of dispute. The General replied that an armistice was out of the question; that a month since he had proposed one to Ampudia, which was declined; that large reinforcements were now reaching him, and although he had neither invited nor provoked hostilities, yet having proceeded thus far, he

would not now suspend them. He added that the capture of the city was certain, but that Arista might withdraw his forces, on condition of leaving the property of the city uninjured.



Market Place of Matamoras.

Operations were now suspended until three o'clock, the time appointed for Arista's answer; but that answer not arriving, General Taylor immediately commenced the crossing, intending to attack the town on the following morning. The Americans expected to have their landing disputed; but in this they were disappointed, and it was soon ascertained that Arista had abandoned the city with all his troops;—the *armistice* petition being but a device to gain time. When the crossing had been effected, and the troops concentrated on the Mexican shore, a parley was sounded, and a staff officer despatched to the Prefect of Matamoras, demanding a surrender. At the same time active preparations were in progress for an assault. These were arrested by a message from the authorities that the city

was at General Taylor's disposal. He accordingly entered, and after erecting the flag of his country upon the highest station, took possession of the city.

The command of Matamoras was entrusted to Colonel Twiggs,* who was dignified with the title of governor. His Mexican predecessor, having by his cruelty and duplicity, disgusted both Americans and citizens, was dismissed from office, and soon after left the city. The army found immense quantities of military and other stores, which had been secreted by Arista previous to his hasty flight, or thrown into wells and bushes in the hurry of retreat. Strict orders were issued by the new governor concerning the rights and property of the citizens, and all business was allowed to go on as usual, except the sale of spirituous liquors. At first the inhabitants evidently regarded the Americans as a band of robbers; but after the above regulations, and the restoration of order, this feeling subsided, and they soon became familiar, and even intimate with the conquerors.

The principal depot of the enemy had thus become the peaceful possession of the valorous few who had conquered at Palo Alto and

* DAVID E. TWIGGS is a native of Georgia, and entered the army as captain of the eighth regiment of infantry on the 12th of March, 1812. He served with distinction in the war with Great Britain, and continued in the army after its close. On the 14th of May, 1825, he was appointed major, and on the 8th of June, 1836, was promoted to colonel of the second regiment of dragoons. At the commencement of the Mexican war his regiment formed a part of the army of occupation; and in every affair in which he has taken part, he has figured as a most talented and intrepid officer.

On the 25th of March, 1846, he was detached by General Taylor, to save Point Isabel, which had been fired by the Mexicans. This movement he effected with promptness and energy, and succeeded in rescuing several of the burning buildings. On the 8th of May he led the right wing of the army, and on the 9th, after distinguishing himself in the battle, was entrusted with the arrangements for the exchange of prisoners. For his conduct in these two battles, government promoted him to the rank of brigadier-general. He led the van at Matamoras, and as we have seen, was appointed its governor. At the storming of Monterey, he was ordered to make a diversion in favor of General Worth, and being attacked by the enemy, he had an opportunity to display his generalship in a very conspicuous manner. After the capitulation, he remained with General Taylor until he was detached by order of Major-General Scott, and proceeded to join that officer.

The change of position afforded General Twiggs another opportunity to display his talents as an officer. He enacted a conspicuous part at Vera Cruz, and after its evacuation was appointed governor, in the exercise of whose duties he soon restored the city to tranquillity. He fought at Sierra Gordo, and subsequently captured the city of Jalapa, where he still remains.

Resaca de la Palma. It was the sequel and reward of the victories which had been acquired with so much fatigue and suffering; and the Americans were henceforth to be roofed by habitable houses, and to enjoy conveniences and privileges which long deprivation had rendered luxuries.

Immediately after the capture of Matamoras and the restoration of public quiet, General Taylor issued the following proclamation to the inhabitants of Mexico.

A PROCLAMATION

By the General commanding the Army of the United States of America, to the People of Mexico.

After many years of patient endurance, the United States are at length constrained to acknowledge that a war now exists between our government and the government of Mexico. For many years our citizens have been subjected to repeated insults and injuries, our vessels and cargoes have been seized and confiscated, our merchants have been plundered, maimed, imprisoned without cause and without reparation. At length your government acknowledged the justice of our claims, and agreed by treaty, to make satisfaction by payment of several millions of dollars; but this treaty has been violated by your rulers, and the stipulated payment has been withheld. Our late effort to terminate all the difficulties by peaceful negotiation has been rejected by the dictator Paredes, and our minister of peace, whom your rulers had agreed to receive, has been refused a hearing. He has been treated with indignity and insult, and Paredes has announced that war exists between us. This war, thus first proclaimed by him, has been acknowledged as an existing fact by our President and Congress with perfect unanimity, and will be prosecuted with vigor and energy against your army and rulers; but those of the Mexican people who remain neutral will not be molested.

Your government is in the hands of tyrants and usurpers. They have abolished your state governments, they have overthrown your federal constitution, they have deprived you of the right of suffrage, destroyed the liberty of the press, despoiled you of your arms, and reduced you to a state of absolute dependence upon the power of a military dictator. Your armies and rulers extort from the people by

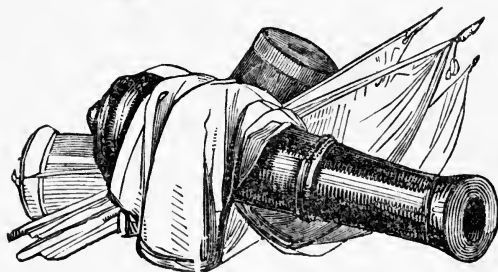
grievous taxation, by forced loans and military seizures, the very money which sustains the usurpers in their power. Being disarmed, you were left defenceless, and as an easy prey to the savage Camanches, who not only destroy your lives and property, but drive into captivity more horrible than death itself your wives and children. It is your military rulers who have reduced you to this deplorable condition. It is these tyrants and their corrupt and cruel satellites, gorged with the people's treasure, by whom you are thus oppressed and impoverished, some of whom have boldly advocated a monarchical government, and would place a European prince upon the throne of Mexico. We come to obtain reparation for repeated wrongs and injuries; we come to obtain indemnity for the past, and security for the future; we come to overthrow the tyrants who have destroyed your liberties; but we come to make no war upon the people of Mexico, nor upon any form of free government they may choose to select for themselves.

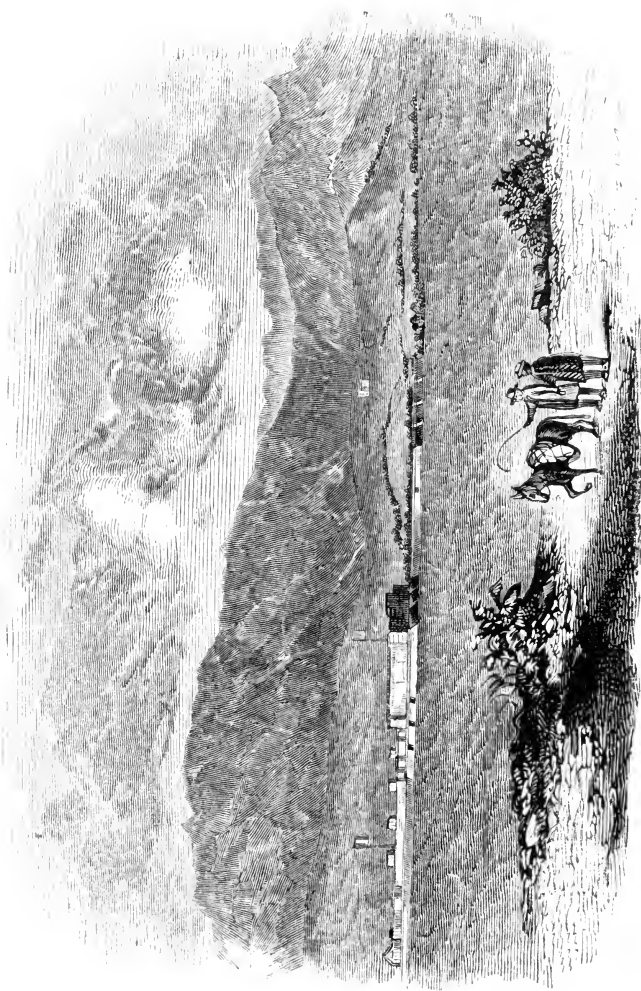
It is our wish to see you liberated from despots, to drive back the savage Camanches, to prevent the renewal of their assaults, and to compel them to restore to you from captivity your long lost wives and children. Your religion, your altars, your churches, the property of your churches and citizens, the emblems of your faith and its ministers, shall be protected, and remain inviolable—hundreds of our army, and hundreds of thousands of our citizens are members of the Catholic church. In every state, and in nearly every city and village of our Union, Catholic churches exist, and the priests perform their holy functions in peace and security under the sacred guarantee of our constitution. We come among the people of Mexico as friends and republican brethren, and all who receive us as such, shall be protected, whilst all who are seduced into the army of your dictator shall be treated as enemies. We shall want from you nothing but food for our army, and for this you shall always be paid in cash the full value. It is the settled policy of your tyrants to deceive you in regard to the character and policy of our government and people. These tyrants fear the example of our free institutions, and constantly endeavor to misrepresent our purposes, and inspire you with hatred for your republican brethren of the American Union. Give us but the opportunity to undeceive you, and you will soon

learn that all the representations of Paredes were false, and were only made to induce you to consent to the establishment of a despotic government. In your struggle for liberty with the Spanish monarchy, thousands of our countrymen risked their lives and shed their blood in your defence. Our own commodore, the gallant Porter, maintained in triumph your flag upon the ocean, and our government was the first to acknowledge your independence. With pride and pleasure we enrolled your name on the list of independent republics, and sincerely desired that you might in peace and prosperity enjoy all the blessings of free government. Success on the part of your tyrants against the army of the Union is impossible; but if they could succeed, it would only be to enable them to fill your towns with their soldiers, eating out your subsistence, and harassing you with still more grievous taxation. Already they have abolished the liberty of the press as the first step towards the introduction of that monarchy which it is their real purpose to proclaim and establish.

Mexicans, we must treat as enemies, and overthrow the tyrants, who, whilst they have wronged and insulted us, have deprived you of your liberty; but the Mexican people who remain neutral during the contest, shall be protected against their military despots by the republican army of the Union.

Z. TAYLOR,
Brevet Major-General U. S. A. Commanding.





View of the Citadel, Bishop's Palace and Independence Hill, Monterey,



Paredes.

CHAPTER VII.

Storming of Monterey.



compassed with difficulties. To remain in the city would give the

THE Americans were now effectively established on the Mexican soil. General Taylor had crossed the Rio Grande, and planted his victorious standard upon the fortresses of Matamoras. The threatened dangers of his camp were removed, and the battles of the 8th and 9th of May had freed him from the immediate presence of the enemy. But he was still en-

enemy opportunity to recover from the panic of defeat, and concentrate a large force in the interior, and he had neither provisions nor means of transportation sufficient to enable him to undertake a march through a hostile country. In addition to this, the express commands of government were that he should act only on the defensive until the amount of his men and provisions would justify him in proceeding otherwise. Numbers of volunteers were continually arriving at Point Isabel, but the scarcity of supplies was so great, that they served rather to burden the General and disconcert his plans than to afford him any assistance. These difficulties might have appalled a less enterprising man than Taylor; but, so far from wishing to remain inactive when victory and other circumstances would have justified it, he dared to plan an attack upon Monterey.

Meanwhile, important movements were going on at the city of Mexico. The defeat of Arista had rendered him unpopular, and a spirit of anarchy pervaded all classes. Arista, however, organized a body of the revolutionists, and defied the power of his antagonists; but an election of June 16th ended his authority by appointing General Paredes as President and commander-in-chief, and General Bravo, governor of Vera Cruz, as Vice-President.

In June, the American army received large accessions of volunteers from different states, but so great were the difficulties which we have mentioned, that it was not able to leave Matamoras before the 5th of August. In the mean time the Texan Rangers, under Captain McCulloch, had captured the ports of Mier, Reynosa, and Camargo, to the latter of which General Taylor directed his march. At the same time General Worth was sent to San Juan, and Captain Wall to Reynosa.

On the 5th of September, General Taylor received intelligence that the Mexican government had entrusted the defence of Monterey to General Arevalo, assisted by Ampudia, who had recently entered it with a reinforcement of three thousand men. He immediately marched toward the city, leaving the superintendence of minor affairs in the care of Major-General Patterson. In his march he passed through Seralvo, the head-quarters of General Worth, and on the morning of the 19th reached the Walnut Springs, three miles from

Monterey, and commanding a fine view of its buildings and fortifications.

Monterey is a strong city, built like Matamoras in the old Spanish style, and surrounded by massive stone walls, which are defended by ditches, bastions, and towers. The houses are of stone, and mostly of one story in height; but the cathedrals and public buildings, like most of those in Mexico, are large and imposing. The Mexicans had taken every precaution for its successful defence, and not only were the walls and parapets lined with cannon, but even the private houses were fortified, and the streets barricaded and planted with artillery in such a manner as to sweep their whole extents. On the hill *Independence*, at some distance from the city, and near the Saltillo road, were a few fortifications, the principal of which was the Bishop's Palace, an immense edifice, including several strong buildings of a pyramidal form, all rigidly fortified, and lined with troops and artillery.*

The first offer of resistance displayed by the enemy was on the

* Prior to the arrival of General Taylor before the city, the following proclamation had been circulated in the Mexican camp. It is useful as showing the mounted force then hovering round the American army, and the estimation in which General Ampudia regarded his opponent's force.

The General-in-chief of the Army of the North, to his companions in arms.

SOLDIERS—The enemy, numbering only 2500 regular troops, the remainder being only a band of adventurers without valor or discipline, are, according to reliable information, about advancing upon Seralvo to commit the barbarity of attacking this most important place,—we count nearly three thousand regulars and auxiliary cavalry, and these will defeat them again and again before they can reach this city. Soldiers, we are constructing fortifications to make the base of our operations secure, and hence we will sally forth at a convenient time, and drive back this enemy at the point of the bayonet.

Soldiers—Three great virtues make the soldier worthy of his profession;—discipline, constancy under fatigue, and valor. He who at this moment would desert his colors, is a coward and a traitor to his country. Our own nation, and even foreign countries, are the witnesses of your conduct. The question now is, whether our independence shall be preserved, or for ever lost, and its solution is in your hands.

I have assured the supreme government of the triumph of our arms, confiding in your loyalty and enthusiasm, and we will prove to the whole world that we are worthy sons of the immortal Hidalgo, Morelo, Allende, Iturbide, and so many other heroes who knew how to die combating for the independence of our cherished country.

Soldiers—Victory or death must be our only device.

PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

Head-Quarters, Monterey, Sept. 14th, 1846.

18th, when General Taylor with a detachment of dragoons and Texan Rangers was fired upon when within two hundred yards of the city, the first ball striking the ground within about ten yards of the spot where he stood. About the same time two hundred and sixty Mexican cavalry appeared on the plain, and, after firing a few volleys, retired into the city.

The appearance of the heights and gorges in the direction of the Saltillo road, induced General Taylor to believe it practicable to turn all the works in that direction, and thus cut off the enemy's line of communication. Accordingly, after establishing his camp at the Walnut Springs, he ordered a close reconnoissance of that ground, which was executed on the evening of the 19th by the engineer officers under the direction of Major Mansfield. A reconnoissance of the eastern approaches was at the same time made by Captain Williams, of the topographical engineers. The examination made by Major Mansfield proved the entire practicability of throwing forward a column to the Saltillo road, and thus turning the position of the enemy. As this was an operation of essential importance, orders were given to Brevet Brigadier-General Worth, commanding the second division, to march with his command on the 20th, in order to turn the hill of the Bishop's Palace, to occupy a position on the Saltillo road, and to carry as many of the enemy's detached works in that quarter as possible. The first regiment of Texas mounted volunteers, under command of Colonel Hays, was associated with the second division in this service. Captain Sanders (engineers), and Lieutenant Meade (topographical engineers), were also ordered to report to General Worth for duty with his column.

A two o'clock, P. M., on the 20th, the second division took up its march. Some officers who were reconnoitering the town, soon discovered and communicated to General Worth, that his movement had been perceived, and that the Mexicans were throwing reinforcements towards the Bishop's Palace and the height which commands it. In order to divert their attention as far as practicable, the first division, under Brigadier-General Twiggs, and field division of volunteers, under Major-General Butler, were displayed in front of the town until dark. Arrangements were made at the same time to place in battery, during the night, at a suitable distance from the

enemy's main work, (the citadel) two twenty-four pounder howitzers, and a ten-inch mortar, with a view to open a fire on the following day, the time proposed for making a diversion in favor of General Worth's movement. The fourth infantry covered this battery during the night; and General Worth having made a reconnaissance as far as the Saltillo road, bivouacked at a defensive position within range of a battery above the Bishop's Palace.



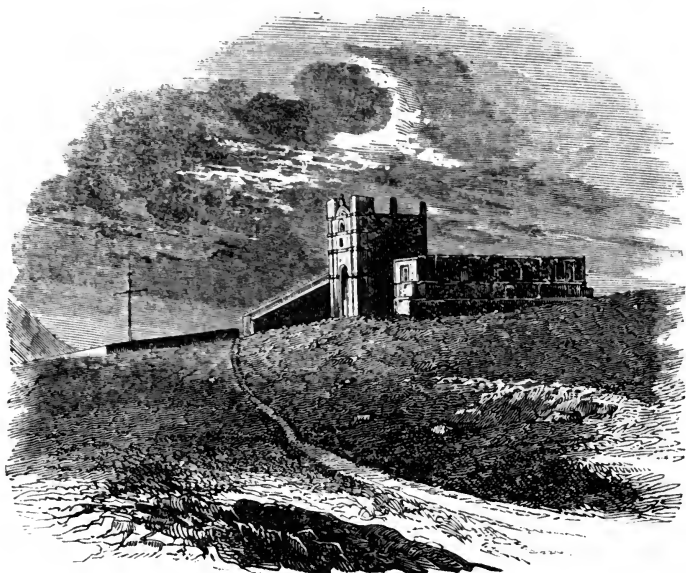
General Twiggs.

Early on the morning of the 21st, General Taylor received a note from General Worth, written at nine o'clock the previous evening, and suggesting a strong diversion against the centre and left of the town, to favor the enterprise against the heights in the rear. This the commander had already intended, and accordingly, the infantry and artillery of the first division, and the field division of volunteers, were ordered under arms, and took the direction of the city, leaving one company of each regiment as a camp guard. The second

dragoons under Lieutenant-Colonel May, and Colonel Wood's regiment of Texas mounted volunteers, under the immediate direction of General Henderson, were directed to the right to support General Worth, if necessary, and to make an impression if practicable, upon the upper quarter of the city. Upon approaching the mortar battery, the first and third regiments of infantry and battalion of Baltimore and Washington volunteers, with Captain Bragg's field battery—the whole under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Garland—were directed toward the lower part of the town with orders to make a strong demonstration, and carry one of the enemy's advanced works, if it could be done without too heavy a loss. Major Mansfield (engineers), Captain Williams, and Lieutenant Pope, (topographical engineers) accompanied this column, the major being charged with its direction and the designation of the points of attack.

At daylight of the 21st, the column of General Worth was again put in motion, and was so arranged as to present ready order of battle at any point on which they might be assailed. While turning the point of a ridge which protruded toward the enemy's guns, they were fired upon by a howitzer and twelve pounder, and soon after while passing round an angle of the mountain at a hacienda called San Jeronima, they encountered a strong force of cavalry and infantry. Captain Gillespie ordered his men to halt and place themselves in ambush. This movement was not perceived by the enemy who bore on full speed, until received by McCulloch's company, together with the artillery of Captains Smith and Scott, aided by Lieutenant Longstreet's company of the eighth infantry, and another of the same regiment. Captain Duncan's battery of light artillery was in action in one minute, discharging thick showers of grape, which did great execution. At the end of fifteen minutes the enemy scattered and fled, leaving about one hundred on the field, of whom thirty were killed. The Americans rapidly pursued, and obtained possession of the gorge, where all the *debouches* from Monterey unite, so that the force just defeated, as also reinforcements and supplies, were excluded from entering the city.

The light batteries were now driven upon the slope of the ridge, and the howitzers opened upon the heights of Palace Hill. Soon after the enemy replied from a nine pounder, situated on the eleva-



Bishop's Palace, Monterey.

tion immediately over the right of the column and directed at Duncan's batteries. This had no other effect than to cause the removal of the colonel's guns to a less exposed position about half a mile further on the Saltillo road. Here he was joined by General Worth, who had ordered the foot regiments to form along the fence, near the point of the ridge. At half past ten, the column moved towards the General's position, amid a continual fire from the enemy, by which Captain McKavett, of the eighth infantry, was shot through the heart, with a nine pound ball, and a private of the fifth infantry mortally wounded in the thigh.

In consequence of this severe annoyance, Worth determined to make himself master of the heights. Besides the impracticability of effective operations against the city until this was accomplished, their occupation was indispensable to the restoration of the line of communication with head quarters, which had been necessarily

abandoned, in order to secure the gorges of the Saltillo road. At noon, therefore, a force was despatched under Captain C. F. Smith, with orders to storm the batteries on the crest of the nearest hill, called by the Mexicans, *Federacion*, and after taking that to carry the fort, called *Soldada*, on the ridge of the same height, retired about six hundred yards. This command consisted of four companies of the artillery battalion, and Green's, McGowan's, R. A. Gillespie's, Chandler's, Ballone's, and McCulloch's companies of Texan rifleman, acting in concert under Major Chevalier—in all about three hundred men.

The assailants advanced with ardor, but as the distance to be climbed after reaching the foot of the hill was full quarter of a mile, over jagged and almost perpendicular rocks, and sandy ledges, it was impossible to approach so rapidly as to surprise the enemy. While they were approaching the base of the mountain, the guns of both batteries opened a plunging fire, and numerous light troops were observed descending and arranging themselves at favorable positions on the slopes. Perceiving this, General Worth ordered Captain Miles with the seventh infantry to support the first party. By marching directly to the foot of the ridge, they arrived first, and the captain despatched Lieutenant Gantt, with a detachment of men upon the hill side, to divert the attention of the enemy from Captain Smith's party, which could not yet be seen. The seventh infantry had already sustained a heavy fire of grape and round shot, while fording the San Juan; and now Lieutenant Gantt's party were greeted with another shower, which tore up the shrubs and loose stones in every direction. None were injured, but their young officer narrowly escaped a shot, which struck the ground so near him as to throw fragments of rock and gravel in his face. Notwithstanding this fire, and a continual discharge of musketry, the detachment continued to advance, driving the Mexicans back until they were recalled.

Captain Smith now arrived and both parties moved up the hill, the rangers in advance, and the attack commenced. The firing soon became general, and after a little while the Mexicans yielded, retiring slowly up the hill, steadily followed by the Americans. Heavy reinforcements now appeared on the summit, and the cardinal import-



ance of the operation induced General Worth to detach to their support the fifth infantry under Major Scott, and Blanchard's companies of volunteers, accompanied by Brigadier-General Smith, who was intrusted with the superintendence of the whole assault. On reaching the advance parties, General Smith discovered that by directing a portion of the force to the right, and moving it obliquely up the hill, he could obtain such advantage from the ground as to carry the Soldada simultaneously with the Federacion. He accordingly pointed it out to the fifth and seventh regiments, with Blanchard's company, and accompanied them in that direction. Both attacks were eminently successful. Amidst a heavy fire of musketry, the troops advanced with loud cheers, the different companies rushing simultaneously into the first fort, while the Mexicans numbering nearly one thousand, escaped on the opposite side. The Soldada was carried so soon afterward, that many of those who participated in the first affair, took part also in the second. The American colors were immediately hoisted, and the guns of both places turned upon the Bishop's Palace.

This brilliant assault reflects the highest credit upon General Smith who directed it, Captains Miles, McCall and C. F. Smith, Major Scott and Colonel P. F. Smith, by whom it was conducted, and, indeed, upon every individual concerned. Their loss was but nine wounded; and a large quantity of military and other stores fell into their hands.

While these operations were conducted on the west of the city, General Taylor with the main army, was busily engaged on the east. Soon after detaching May and Henderson, the mortar served by Captain Ramsay of the ordnance, with the howitzer battery under Captain Webster, had opened its fire upon the citadel, from whence it was deliberately answered. General Butler's division now took up a position in rear of this battery, and soon the discharges of artillery, mingled with a rapid firing of small arms, showed that Lieutenant Garland's command had become warmly engaged. It being necessary to support this attack, General Taylor ordered the fourth infantry and three regiments of Butler's division, to march in the direction of the advanced work in the lower extremity of the town, leaving the first Kentucky regiment to cover the mortar and howitzer

battery. By some mistake, two companies of the fourth infantry did not receive this order, and consequently were not able to join their companions until some time afterward.

While these companies were moving, Lieutenant Garland's command had approached the town in a direction to the right of the advanced work, at the north-eastern angle of the city, and the engineer officer, covered by skirmishers, had succeeded in entering the suburbs and gaining cover. The remainder of the command now advanced and entered the town, under a heavy fire of artillery from the citadel and works on the left, aided by the musketry of the houses and small works in front. A movement to the right was attempted, with a view to gain the rear of the advanced work; but the troops were so much exposed to a fire which they could not effectually return, and had already sustained such severe loss, particularly in officers, that it was deemed best to withdraw them to a more secure position. Captain Backus, however, of the first infantry, with portions of his own and other companies, had gained the roof of a tannery which looked directly into the gorge of the redoubt, upon which and the strong building in its rear, he poured a most destructive fire. By coinciding in point of time with the advance of a body of volunteers upon that work, this fire contributed essentially to its fall.

Meanwhile the three volunteer regiments under General Butler, had been advancing to an assault. The leading brigade under Brigadier-General Quitman, preceded by three companies of the fourth infantry, continued its advance upon the redoubt, while Butler with the first Ohio regiment entered the town on the right. The latter companies had advanced within short range of the work, when a sudden discharge, from the enemy's guns, struck down nearly one-third of the officers and men, and rendered it necessary to fall back upon the two advancing columns. Unappalled by the catastrophe of their comrades, as well as by their own severe loss, Quitman's brigade continued to advance, and carried the work together with the strong building in its rear. Three officers, twenty-seven privates, five pieces of artillery and a supply of ammunition, was the reward of the conquerors.

Butler, in the meantime, had entered the town with the first Ohio

regiment ; but he here received an order from General Taylor to return, in consequence of not being able to accomplish any thing in front ; but upon the reception of intelligence that the Mexican redoubt had surrendered, this order was almost immediately countermanded. Butler then entered the town at a point further to the left, and marched in the direction of the enemy's second battery ; but while making an examination in order to ascertain the possibility of carrying this work, he was wounded, and soon after left the field. On account of this accident, together with the known force of the enemy, it was thought advisable to withdraw the troops.

Portions of the various regiments engaged, were now under cover of the captured battery and some buildings on its front and right. The field-battery of Captains Bragg and Ridgely, was also partially covered by the battery. The enemy now poured an incessant fire from their second battery, and the works on its right, and from the citadel at every approach of the Americans. General Taylor was now joined by General Twiggs, who, though quite unwell, continued in active duty, and was instrumental in causing the artillery captured from the enemy, to be placed in battery, and served by Captain Ridgely, until the arrival of Captain Webster's howitzer battery, which took its place. Meanwhile a company collected from the Baltimore battalion, and the first, third and fourth regiments were ordered to enter the town, penetrate to the right, and carry the second battery if possible. This command, under Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, advanced beyond a bridge called Purisima, and sustained themselves for some time in that advanced position.* But as they were unable

* The following thrilling extracts from the letter of an officer in the Baltimore battalion, show the danger which that brave detachment underwent in this assault.

"I saw Colonel Watson shouting ; but as to hearing a command that was an impossibility, owing to the deafening roar of the cannon and musketry. I reached my company just as the colonel was dismounting from his horse, which the next moment fell from a shot. He cried out to the men 'Shelter yourselves men, the best way you can.' At this moment the battalion was scattered over a space of about an acre, and the men were lying down, the shot in most instances flying over our heads ; but the guns were soon depressed, and the shot began to take effect.

"I was lying close to Colonel Watson alongside of a hedge, when he jumped up and cried out, 'now's the time boys, follow me.' I was up and after him in a second, my men following me. We were now in a street or lane, with a few houses on either side, and within a hundred yards of three batteries which

to gain the rear of the battery, or to make a permanent impression where they were, they were withdrawn with a section of Captain Ridgely's battery which had joined them, to the first battery.

During the progress of this cannonade a party of Mexican cavalry were observed in the direction of the citadel, moving toward the American lines. Captain Bragg immediately galloped with his battery, to a suitable position, from which a few discharges effectually dispersed them. Captain Millar of the first infantry, was despatched with a mixed command, to support the battery on this service. The enemy's lancers had previously charged upon the Ohio and a part of the Mississippi regiments near some fields, at a distance from the edge of the town, but had been repulsed with considerable loss ; and some cavalry on the opposite side of the river, was also dispersed by Captain Ridgely's battery and returned to the city.

At the approach of evening, all the troops that had been engaged were ordered back to the camp, except Captain Ridgely's battery and

completely raked it, in addition to which two twelve pound guns were planted in the Castle on the right, and completely enfiladed the distance we had to make. Add to this the thousand musketeers on the house-tops, and the barricades at the head of the street up which we advanced, and at every cross street, and you may form some idea of the deluge of balls poured upon us. Onward we went, men and horses falling at every step. Cheers, shrieks, groans and words of command, added to the din, whilst the roar of the guns was absolutely deafening.

"We had advanced up the street under this awful fire nearly two hundred yards, when we reached a cross street, at the corner of which all who had succeeded in getting thus far alive, halted, as if by mutual consent. I was shaking Colonel Watson by the hand whilst he was complimenting me, when a shower of grape, round and canister shot came from the corner above, and five officers fell, and I know not how many privates. Each man sought some place of apparent shelter. I sat down on the ground with my back to the wall of a house. On my left were two men torn nearly to pieces. One of them was lying flat on his back, with his legs extending farther into the street than mine. Crash came another shower of grape, which tore one of his wounded legs nearly off. He reared up, shrieked, and fell back a corpse. I never moved, for I was satisfied that one place was as safe as another. * * * * * Above, below, alongside, between legs and arms everywhere the balls whistled and howled. The air seemed cut to pieces by the quantity that the artillery hurled at us, and it would be childish to tell you *how close* they came to me, and what and how many escapes I had. I was exposed to shot in that fight for nine hours."

The same letter speaks thus of Colonel Watson, who was killed during this cannonade by a shot in the neck :—

"He met with a gallant soldier's death—his face to the foe. His loss is deplored by all who knew his generosity of heart, and chivalry of character : to me individually it is great, but to the battalion it is irreparable."

the regular infantry of the first division, who, during the night, were detailed under Lieutenant Garland, as a guard for the works. One battalion of the first Kentucky regiment was ordered to reinforce this command. Intrenching tools were procured, and during the night additional strength was given to the works and protection to the men, by parties under the direction of Lieutenant Scarritt, of the engineers.

Thus the first day's assault had given to the Americans two important redoubts without the city, and a well fortified work within. But these advantages were purchased at the expense of some of their most valuable officers;* and their total loss, as stated by General Taylor in his official despatch, was not less than 394 in killed and wounded.

The troops under General Worth lay on their arms all night, and at three o'clock next morning were aroused for an attack upon the Bishop's Palace. The storming party consisted of two companies of the fourth artillery battalion and one of the third; three companies of eighth infantry, including two hundred Texan riflemen, under Colonel Hays and Lieutenant-Colonel Walker: the whole was superintended by Lieutenant-Colonel Childs, and conducted to the points of ascent by Captain Sanders and Lieutenant Meade. Being favoured by the weather, they had reached by the dawn of day, within about one hundred yards of the crest, at which position a body of the enemy had been stationed on the previous evening, in order to gall the assailants from the clefts of the rocks. Their retreating fire was not returned, until Colonels Childs' and Hays' commands had reached to within a few yards of the summit, when a well directed volley, followed by the bayonet of the regulars, and the rush of the Texans, placed the Americans in possession of the work. The cannon having been previously withdrawn, no impression could be made upon the massive walls of the Palace, or its outworks, without

* Captain Williams, topographical engineers; Lieutenants Terrett and Dilworth, first infantry; Lieutenant Woods, second infantry; Captains Morris and Field, Brevet Major Barbour, Lieutenants Irwin and Hazlett, third infantry; Lieutenant Hoskins, fourth infantry; Lieutenant Colonel Watson, Baltimore battalion; Captain Allen and Lieutenant Putnam, Tennessee regiment, and Lieutenant Hett, Ohio regiment, were killed, together with Captain McKavett of the eighth infantry, the only officer who fell in General Worth's division.

artillery. Lieutenant Rowland of Duncan's battery was now ordered from the main road with a twelve pound howitzer, and in two hours mounted his guns, although he had been obliged to climb a steep and rugged acclivity more than seven hundred feet high, his soldiers carrying their piece by main strength. Covered by the epaulment of the captured battery, this howitzer now opened upon the Palace and its outwork, at the distance of four hundred yards, and soon produced a visible effect. To reinforce the position thus acquired, the fifth infantry and Major Scott and Blanchard's volunteers had passed from the first heights, and reached the second in time to participate in the operations against the Palace.

The remainder of these operations, together with its capture, we give in General Worth's own language, as contained in his official report to General Taylor :

“After many affairs of light troops and several feints, a heavy sortie was made, sustained by a strong corps of cavalry, with desperate resolution, to repossess the heights. Such a move had been anticipated and prepared for. Lieutenant-Colonel Childs had advanced, under cover, two companies of light troops, under command of Captain Vinton, acting major, and judiciously drawn up, the main body of his command flanked on the right by Hays, and on the left by Walker's Texans. The enemy advanced boldly, was repulsed by one general discharge from all arms, fled in confusion, closely pressed by Childs and Hays, preceded by the light troops under Vinton ; and while they fled past our troops, entered the palace and fort. In a few moments the unpretending flag of our union, had replaced the gaudy standard of Mexico. The captured guns—one six-inch howitzer, one twelve and two nine pounder brass guns, together with Duncan's and McCall's field-batteries, which came up at a gallop, were in full and effective play upon the retiring and confused masses that filled the street (of which we had the prolongation) leading to the nearest plaza, *La Capella*, also crowded with troops. At this moment the enemy's loss was heavy. The investment was now complete except the forces necessary to hold the positions on Independencia and serve the guns, (shifted to points where the shot could be made to reach the great plaza,) the division was now concentrated around the palace, and preparation made to

assault the city, on the following day or sooner, should the General-in-chief either so direct, or before communication be had, renew the assault from the opposite quarter. In the mean time attention was directed to every provision our circumstances permitted, to alleviate the condition of our wounded soldiers and officers, and to the decent interment of the dead, not omitting in either respect all that was due to those of the enemy."

In this assault the Americans lost but seven killed and twelve wounded; the loss of the enemy was not precisely ascertained, but is known to have been very heavy.

During the whole of this day there were but few active operations at the lower part of the city. The citadel and other works continued to fire at the American companies exposed to their range, and at the redoubt occupied by their troops. The guard left in it, the preceding night, except Captain Ridgely's company, were relieved at mid-day by General Quitman's brigade. Captain Bragg's battery was thrown under cover in front of the town, to repel any demonstration of cavalry in that quarter.

During the night the enemy evacuated nearly all their defences in the lower part of the city. Early in the morning this was reported by General Quitman, who, having already meditated an assault upon those works, now received instructions, leaving it discretionary with him to enter the city, but requested him, in case of doing so to proceed very carefully, covering his men by the houses and walls, and advancing only so far as he might deem safe or prudent. Accordingly a portion of the brigade entered the town, and forced their way successfully to the principal plaza. General Taylor then ordered the remainder of the troops, under Brigadier-General Twiggs, to act as a reserve, and soon after repaired to the abandoned works. The second regiment of Texas mounted volunteers was also ordered up, who entered the city, dismounted, and under the immediate orders of General Henderson, co-operated with Quitman's brigade. They were assisted by Captain Bragg's battery, supported by the third infantry, who succeeded in battering down a portion of the cathedral. The troops advanced from house to house, and from square to square, until they reached a street but one square in rear of the principal plaza, in and near which the enemy's force was

mainly concentrated. Though vigorous, the advance was conducted with due caution, so that notwithstanding the continual fire of the enemy, who suffered heavily, the assailants lost but few. In the mean time Captain Ridgely had served against the city a piece captured in the first battery, until the advance of the soldiers rendered it imprudent to fire in the direction of the cathedral.

Thus the Mexicans had retired from the lower portion of the city, in order to concentrate their forces for a final effort behind their barricades ; and it was apparent that the army could now operate successfully against them. As Quitman's brigade had been on duty all the previous night, and were much exhausted, General Taylor determined to withdraw them to the evacuated works, and concert with General Worth a combined attack upon the town. Accordingly the troops were relieved after nightfall by the brigade of General Hamer, and deliberately, and in good order, resumed their original position.

On returning to camp General Taylor received intelligence by an officer, that General Worth, induced by the firing in the lower part of the city, was about making an attack at the upper extremity, which had been evacuated by the enemy to a considerable distance. Although this would have afforded a fine opportunity for co-operation, yet the commander did not think it expedient to change his orders, and accordingly retired to camp.

The 23d had been a season of activity to the division under General Worth. About ten o'clock, A. M., a firing was heard in the opposite quarter, whose heaviness and continuance, as well as other circumstances, induced a belief that the commander-in-chief was conducting a main attack, and that his orders for co-operation having to travel a circuit of six miles, had either been mis-carried or intercepted by some of the numerous cavalry parties of the enemy. Under these convictions the troops were instantly ordered to commence an operation, which if not otherwise directed General Worth had designed to execute under favor of the night. Two columns of attack were organized, to move along the two principal streets which run in the direction of the great plaza. The advance was composed of light troops slightly extended, whose duties were arduous and dangerous. They were ordered to mask

the men whenever practicable, avoiding the points swept by the enemy's artillery, and pressing on to the first plaza, (*capella*), obtain the ends of the streets beyond them, enter the buildings, and by means of picks and bars break through the longitudinal section of the walls, work from house to house, and ascending the roofs, to place themselves on the same, breast height with the enemy. Light artillery by sections and pieces, under Duncan, Rowland, McCall, Martin, Hays, Irons, Clarke, and Curd, followed at suitable intervals, covered by reserves to guard the pieces, together with the whole operation, against the probable enterprises of cavalry upon our left. This was effectually done by seizing and commanding the head of every cross street.

At numerous well chosen points, the enemy had barricaded the streets by heavy masonry walls, each containing embrasures for one or more guns, and the whole well supported by cross batteries. These arrangements made it necessary for the Americans to act with much precaution, and gave a complicated character to their operations; but notwithstanding the difficulties in their way, they worked steadily, simultaneously, and successfully.

Meanwhile the firing on the opposite side of the city had ceased, and the enemy were enabled to transfer their men and guns from that position, and employ them against General Worth. The troops, however, still continued to advance, and at dark reached within one block of the principal plaza, having worked through walls and squares, left a covered way in their rear, and carried a large building which towered over the principal defences, and on the roof of which two howitzers and a six pounder were placed during the night and ensuing morning.

The services of Major Monroe in this affair are thus described by General Worth:

“As the columns of attack were moving from the Palace Hill, Major Monroe, chief of artillery, reached me with a ten inch mortar, which was immediately advanced to the plaza *chapel*, put in position, masked by the church wall, its bed adjusted as rapidly as possible, and by sunset opened upon the great square. At this period our troops had worked to within one square of the plaza. The exact position of our comrades on the opposite side was not known, and

the distance of the position to be assailed by the bomb battery ; but conjecturing, eight hundred yards was assumed, and the fuze and charge regulated accordingly. 'The first shell fell a little short of the point on which it was directed, and beside our troops ; a slight increase of the projecting charge gave exact results. 'The whole service was managed by Major Monroe most admirably, and, combined with other operations, exercised a decided influence upon the final results. Early on the morning of the 23d, Major Brown's artillery battalion was despatched with a select command, and one section of McCall's battery, under Lieutenant Irons, to occupy the stone mill and adjacent grounds, constituting one league in advance, the narrow gorge near St. Catarina. 'The major took possession, repulsed the enemy's pickets, and was preparing his command to resist any attack, when he received my orders to retrace his steps, enter the city, and form the main reserve to the assaulting columns. He came up in good time and in good order, and was at once under fire."

Early on the morning of the 24th, Colonel Morena arrived at the camp of General Taylor, bearing the following communication from General Ampudia :

[TRANSLATION.]

D. Pedro Ampudia, General-in-Chief, to Major-General Taylor.

HEAD-QUARTERS AT MONTEREY,
Sept. 23d, 1846, 9 o'clock, P. M.

SEÑOR GENERAL: Having made the defence of which I believe this city is susceptible, I have fulfilled my duty, and have satisfied the military honor, which in a certain manner, is common to all armies of the civilized world.

To prosecute the defence therefore, would only result in distress to the population, who have already suffered enough from the misfortunes consequent on war ; and taking it for granted that the American government has manifested a disposition to negotiate, I propose to you to evacuate the city and its fort, taking with me the *personelle* and *materielle* which have remained, and under the assurance that no harm shall ensue to the inhabitants who have taken a part in the defence.

Be pleased to accept the assurance of my distinguished consideration.

PEDRO DE AMPUDIA

To SEÑOR DON Z. TAYLOR,

Commander-in-Chief of the American Army.

General Taylor replied as follows :

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION,
Camp before Monterey, Sept. 24, 1846, 7 o'clock, A. M.

SIR: Your communication bearing date at nine o'clock, P. M. on the 23d instant, has just been received by the hands of Colonel Morena.

In answer to your proposition to evacuate the city and fort, with all the personel and materiel of war, I have to state that my duty compels me to decline acceding to it. A complete surrender of the town and garrison, the latter as prisoners of war, is now demanded. But such surrender will be upon terms—and the gallant defence of the place, creditable alike to the Mexican troops and nation, will prompt me to make those terms as liberal as possible. The garrison will be allowed at your option, after laying down its arms, to retire to the interior, on condition of not serving again during the war, or until regularly exchanged. I need hardly say that the rights of non-combatants will be respected.

An answer to this communication is required by 12 o'clock. If you assent to an accommodation, an officer will be despatched at once, under instructions to arrange the conditions.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Maj. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.

SEÑOR D. PEDRO DE AMPUDIA,
General-in-Chief, Monterey.

A cessation of hostilities now took place, and in the meanwhile, at the request of General Ampudia, the two commanders had a personal interview,* which resulted in the capitulation of the city on the following terms :

* This interview is thus humorously described by an eye witness :

"Ampudia was all courtesy and fine words, big speeches, great volubility, with an abundance of gesticulations, shrugs, nods, alternate smiles and frowns, and that whole catalogue of silent language with which persons of French origin (as is Ampudia) are wont to help the expression of their ideas.

"General Taylor, on the other hand, was as dry as a chip, as plain as a pipe stem, and as short as pie crust. Dressed in his best coat (which by the by looks as if it had served some half a dozen campaigns,) with his glazed oil-cloth cap, strapless pants, and old-fashioned white vest, he looked more like an old farmer lately elected militia colonel, who had put on his everyday suit, with the slightest imaginable sign of military foppery, to distinguish him from a crowd of mere

Terms of Capitulation of the city of Monterey, the capital of Nuevo Leon, agreed upon by the undersigned Commissioners, to wit: General Worth, of the United States army, General Henderson, of the Texan volunteers, and Colonel Davis, of the Mississippi riflemen, on the part of Major-General Taylor, commander-in-chief of the United States forces; and General Raquena and General Ortega, of the army of Mexico, and Senor Manuel M. Llano, governor of Nuevo Leon, on the part of Senor General Don Pedro de Ampudia, commanding-in-chief the army of the north of Mexico.

Art. 1. As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present position of the contending armies, it is agreed that the city, the fortifications, cannon, the munitions of war, and all other public property, with the undermentioned exceptions, be surrendered to the commanding general of the United States forces, now at Monterey.

Art. 2. That the Mexican forces be allowed to retain the following arms, to wit: the commissioned officers their side arms, the infantry their arms and accoutrements, the cavalry their arms and accoutrements, the artillery one field battery, not to exceed six pieces, with twenty-one rounds of ammunition.

Art. 3. That the Mexican armed forces retire within seven days from this date, beyond the line formed by the pass of the Rinconada, the city of Linares, and San Fernando de Presas.

Art. 4. That the citadel of Monterey be evacuated by the Mexi-

cilians. In his reply to Ampudia's long harangues, he used such direct, blunt, and emphatic language, that the valorous Mexican was thrown all aback and 'had nothing to say.'"

"Ampudia opened the interview by stating that his forces were too large to be conquered by General Taylor's army—that he had an abundance of ammunition, 7000 infantry and 3000 cavalry, with 40 cannon, and the best artillerists in the world—that his loss was very small, and he felt confident he could defend the city against a much stronger force than that under General Taylor's command; but that from motives of humanity—to spare the effusion of blood—to save the lives of helpless women and children, he was willing so far to compromise the glory of the great Mexican nation, as to surrender the city, provided he was allowed to retire with his whole force, and carry the public property with him, and all the arms and munitions of war. When he had finished his magnificent oration, which in the style of his celebrated proclamation, was garnished with numerous allusions to the stupendous power, and unfading glory and renown of magnanimous Mexico, old Zachary quietly stuck his hands deep into his pockets, cocked his head a little on one side, and gently raising his grizzly eyebrows, that the bold little black eye lurking beneath might have full play upon the grandiloquent Mexican, replied in these few, but expressive words:—

"General Ampudia, we come here to take Monterey, and we are going to do it on such terms as please us. I wish you good morning.' And the old general hobbled off on his two short little legs, leaving the Mexican general and staff in the profoundest bewilderment."

can, and occupied by the American forces, to-morrow morning, at ten o'clock.

Art. 5. To avoid collisions, and for mutual convenience, that the troops of the United States will not occupy the city until the Mexican forces have withdrawn, except for hospital and storage purposes.

Art. 6. That the forces of the United States will not advance beyond the line specified in the 2d [3d] article before the expiration of eight weeks, or until the orders or instructions of the respective governments can be received.

Art. 7. That the public property to be delivered shall be turned over and received by officers appointed by the commanding generals of the two armies.

Art. 8. That all doubts as to the meaning of any of the preceding articles shall be solved by an equitable construction, and on principles of liberality to the retiring army.

Art. 9. That the Mexican flag, when struck at the citadel, may be saluted by its own battery.

Done at Monterey, Sept. 24, 1846.

W. J. WORTH,

Brigadier-General U. S. A.

J. PINKNEY HENDERSON,

Maj. Gen. Comdg. the Texan Vol.

JEFFERSON DAVIS,

Col. Mississippi Riflemen.

MANUEL M. LLANO,

T. REQUENA,

ORTEGA.

(Approved:)

PEDRO AMPUDIA.

Z. TAYLOR,

Maj. Gen. U. S. A. Comdg.

The strength of the city and other important items is thus laid down by General Taylor in his official despatch :

“ Upon occupying the city it was discovered to be of great strength in itself, and to have its approaches carefully and strongly fortified. The town and works were armed with forty-two pieces of cannon, well supplied with ammunition, and manned with a force of at least 7000 troops of the line, and from 2000 to 3000 irregulars. The force under my orders before Monterey was 425 officers, and 6220

men. Our artillery consisted of one ten-inch mortar, two twenty four pound howitzers, and four light field batteries of four guns—the mortar being the only piece suitable to the operations of a siege.

“Our loss is twelve* officers, and one hundred and eight men killed; thirty-one† officers, and three hundred and thirty-seven men wounded. That of the enemy is not known; but is believed considerably to exceed our own.”

The conduct of General Worth is thus noticed by those who shared the dangers of the 22d with him.

“General Worth has distinguished himself as a gallant soldier and a skilful commander. General Taylor gave him a fair chance, and he has nobly availed himself of it. His division, with Hays’s regiment of Texans, have gained more ground, and carried more points, than all the rest of the army, and with very little loss. It will be remembered that he made a circuit to the west and rear of the city, and then stormed several strong positions, and penetrated into the heart of the city, which is nothing but one fortification, the thick walls being pierced for muskets, and cannon being placed so as to rake the principal streets. The roofs being flat, and the front walls rising three or four feet above the roof, of course every street has a line of breastworks on each side. It was amid such scenes that the gallant Worth led his division to victory.” “I was expecting to see him rushing his men into unnecessary danger, in order to win for them and himself great military fame; but his conduct has been very different from this. His great study has been to gain the

* Capt. Williams, topographical engineers; Lieut. Ferrett, first infantry, Capt. L. N. Morris, third do.; Capt. Field, third do.; Major Barbour, third do.; Lieut. Corwin, third do.; Lieut. Hazlitt, third do.; Lieut. Hoskins, third do.; Lieut. Woods, fourth do.; Capt. McKavett, 8th do.; Col. Watson, Baltimore battalion; Capt. Battlem, first Tennessee regiment; Lieut. Putnam, first Tennessee do.

† A lieut. in a Georgia company; Major Lear, third infantry, severely. Capt. Bainbridge, third do., very slightly; Lieut. R. H. Graham, fourth do.; Capt. Lamotte, first do., slightly; Lieut. Dilworth, first do., severely; Lieut. Abercrombie, first do., slightly; Lieut. Russell, fifth do., slightly; Lieut. Potter, seventh do., slightly; Gen. Butler, volunteer division, slightly; Col. Mitchell, Ohio volunteers, slightly; Col. McClung, Mississippi, severely; Major Alexander, Tennessee volunteers, do.; Lieut. Allen, do. do.; Lieut. Scudder, do. do.; Lieut. Nixon, do. do.; Capt. Dowler, Morris regiment; Lieut. Armstrong, Ohio regiment, severely; Capt. Gillespie, Texas Rangers, mortally wounded, since dead.

commanding points with the least possible sacrifice of life. At first it seemed totally impossible to storm these heights, but it has been done."

General Taylor also notices him in the following terms. "To the general officers commanding divisions, Major-Generals Butler and Henderson, and Brigadier-Generals Twiggs and Worth, I must express my obligations for the efficient aid which they have rendered in their respective commands. Brigadier-General Worth was intrusted with an important detachment, which rendered his operations independent of my own. 'These operations were conducted with ability, and crowned with complete success.' The despatch is full of compliments to the officers and soldiers who participated in the attack.

Concerning the *terms* offered to the garrison, the General thus writes :

"It will be seen that the terms granted the Mexican garrison are less rigorous than those first imposed. The gallant defence of the town, and the fact of a recent change of government in Mexico, believed to be favorable to the interests of peace, induced me to concur with the commission in these terms, which will, I trust, receive the approval of the government. The latter consideration also prompted the convention for a temporary cessation of hostilities. Though scarcely warranted by my instructions, yet the change of affairs since those instructions were issued, seemed to warrant this course. I beg to be advised as early as practicable whether I have met the views of the government in these particulars."

The news of the capture of Monterey electrified the whole country, and the gallant army of the Rio Grande received thanks and congratulations from every quarter. That any army should capture a town so defended, and whose garrison were double their number, does indeed deserve the highest rewards of a grateful nation.

General Taylor now established his head-quarters at Monterey, while General Worth was sent with twelve hundred men and eight field pieces to Saltillo. Possession was taken of this place without opposition.

The following is the official despatch of the Mexican general regarding the capture of Monterey. It appears that after the capitu-



General Ampudia.

lation, he retired to Saltillo with a view to fortify that place, but not receiving the co-operation of the inhabitants, he subsequently retired toward the capital.

Official despatch of General Ampudia to the Mexican Secretary of War, announcing the surrender of Monterey.

MOST EXCELLENT SIR:—After a brilliant defence, in the course of which the enemy was repulsed with the loss of fifteen hundred men from various posts, he succeeded in possessing himself of the heights commanding the Bishop's Palace, and another to the south of it, and likewise a detached breastwork called the *Tenesia*, and continuing his attacks through the houses, which he pierced in a direction towards the centre of the city, he succeeded in posting himself within half gun shot of the principal square where the troops were posted, who suffered much from the hollow shot.

Under these circumstances I was requested by various principal officers, to come to such terms as would diminish our losses ; for to open our way with the bayonet, surrounded as we were by intrenched enemies, would have resulted in the dispersal of the troops, and nothing of the *materiel* would have been saved. These con-

siderations having been weighed by me, I also took into view what the city suffered, and would suffer from the attacks, by the piercing of the houses, as well as the destruction by the bombs ; the scarcity of ammunition which was beginning to be felt ; the provisions which we were losing as the enemy's lines approached the centre ; the distance from our supplies ; and finally, that to protract this state of things for two or three days, even if it were possible to do so, could not end in a triumph, and I consented to open propositions which resulted in the annexed terms of capitulation.*

Your excellency will perceive that they preserve the honor of the nation, and that of the army ; and it is to be observed that, if they do not grant us as much as was perhaps expected, that of itself proves the superiority of the enemy, not in valor, which he displayed in most of the combats, but in his position within the squares of pierced masonry which surrounded the square, and cut off any supplies of provisions, wood, or other articles necessary to subsistence.

With the greatest regret the army withdraws from their capital, abundantly watered with its blood, leaving under the guarantee of the promises of the American generals the severely wounded and the neighboring population of the state, whose civil authorities will continue in the exercise of their functions. To-morrow I shall continue my march to Saltillo, where I will await the orders of the supreme government ; and in communicating this to you, I have the honor to reiterate the assurances of my highest respect.

God and liberty !

PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

Head-Quarters in Monterey, Sept. 25, 1846.

Compared with General Taylor's report and with Ampudia's previous proclamation, this document is curious, as it exhibits not only the characteristic differences in the style of language of the two generals, but also that the opinion previously entertained of the American commander, had undergone some modification.

Upon the reception of the above report, the President issued the following

* Omitted ; being previously given in General Taylor's report.

PROCLAMATION,

Of General Salas, the acting President, to the people of Mexico, announcing the loss of Monterey.

Mexicans ! A government established against the will of the nation is interested in concealing from it events which are disastrous to it ; above all when the responsibility of their occurrences must fall upon the government. A government whose sentiments and interests are no other than those of the nation, and which has emanated from the movement by which it threw off its oppressors, has no need to conceal any thing from it, for the nation itself must combat for its preservation and for its honor.

Mexicans ! Monterey has fallen. It was not enough to defy death as our valiant fellow countrymen did for four days ; it was necessary to do more—to defy want in every shape, and the inefficiency of means of resistance. The intention of the enemy, to occupy the whole republic is manifest ; but the government is determined to triumph or perish with the republic. Partial disasters are of no importance ; the Spanish nation suffered much more in the space of six years, and the results of her heroic efforts, and the co-operation of all her sons, was that the bones of half a million of unjust invaders whiten the fields of the peninsula. Shall we become unworthy of independence by not showing ourselves sons worthy of our fathers ? That independence was achieved by us alone, only after ten years of constancy ; and it is not possible that an organized nation should show less strength than its oppressed sons, such as our first leaders were.

Mexicans ! The time to act has come. Will you suffer your population to be decimated, sending it to perish by handfuls on the frontier, one to-day, another to-morrow, and to perish less by the enemy's balls than by neglect ? The government will exert all its power in the defence of rights ; but it has a right to expect that indifference or inactive contemplation shall not be the recompense of its plan of operation ; for the nation would prefer that not one stone should be left on another, rather than behold its sovereignty, its rights, and its temples trampled under foot. The invincible general called by it to place himself at the head of the troops, is resolved not to survive the dishonors of his country.

Will it be less so? No. Our blood and our property will be the sacrifice that we offer up; and when you are in the full enjoyment of the rights which you claimed, I do not doubt of your co-operation, and with it we shall snatch from fortune, that which in the end will ensure to us existence and honor.

JOSE MARIANO DE SALAS.

MEXICO, Sept. 30, 1846.

For some time after General Taylor had established his headquarters at Monterey, he was obliged to remain perfectly passive, being in want of all the necessary appendages of an army, and surrounded by difficulties. The Mexicans had evacuated all the country north and east of San Luis Potosi, leaving behind them about forty dragoons to destroy fortifications which had been constructed at Los Muertos, a naturally strong and difficult pass on the road to Saltillo, and about five or six miles beyond the Rinconada. They also dismantled Saltillo, destroying whatever might be of use to the American army, and which they could not carry away. "Thus there was nothing left for General Taylor to conquer, but a barren region of rugged mountains and thirsty plains, affording neither water nor provisions for the subsistence of man or beast, over a distance of two or three hundred miles, to San Luis Potosi. If, as has been said, General Taylor has orders to march upon San Luis Potosi, so as to reach that city by the end of November, the question arises, how he is to traverse such a country, as he will have to do by a forced march at the rate of fifteen or twenty miles a-day."

"The only water in this route is in the Mexican tanks, which will doubtless all be broken up as the enemy retires. To carry water sufficient to save his army and teams from suffering, would probably require more horses, mules, and oxen, than are now in the army, all of which are required for the transportation of the necessary stores and munitions. In making this retreat the enemy have doubtless adopted a wise policy, leaving behind them a far more formidable enemy for General Taylor to encounter, (viz: this march,) than he could ever find in their own arms and fortified towns."

This policy has doubtless been dictated by the sagacity of Santa

Anna. It is stated on good authority, that he had sent orders to Ampudia, to evacuate Monterey and all other places this side of the mountains; but that those orders were not received till after the battle.*

While affairs were in this condition, considerable misunderstanding took place between the volunteers of the army and the Mexican citizens. The "terms of capitulation" appear to have been unpopular with the majority of the army, and this with other causes, led the more independent portion to treat the Mexican residents with an insolence approaching to tyranny. On the other hand the citizens, exasperated by the loss of their city, and looking upon their enemies as barbarous invaders, watched every covert opportunity to retaliate. These feelings increased to such an extent that it became no uncommon thing to find in the morning, several bodies of those who had been murdered during the previous night. The subjoined correspondence will show the dispositions entertained by the authorities of the respective parties concerning these outrages.

Under the date of September 29th, Governor Morales thus writes to General Taylor.

"Multitudes of complaints have been made to this government, against excesses committed upon persons and property of Mexicans daily, by the volunteers, in the service of the United States, and I am this moment informed, that three of our citizens have been killed by them, without pity, or any reasonable motive, only because they possess the power to do so. Under such circumstances it is impossible that society can remain in much security, as the most essential guaranties are wanting. I have the honor of making this known to your excellency, hoping that measures will be adopted to put an end to such atrocities in future, and to carry into effect the assurances given of protection to the people.

"Repeating my esteem and consideration for your excellency, I am, &c. &c."

On the 1st of October, General Taylor replied as follows:—

"The communication of your excellency dated 29th ult., relative to excesses committed by volunteers in Monterey, was duly received.

* Galveston News, October 30th.

Some delay has occurred in answering it, in order that I might communicate with the commandant of that post.

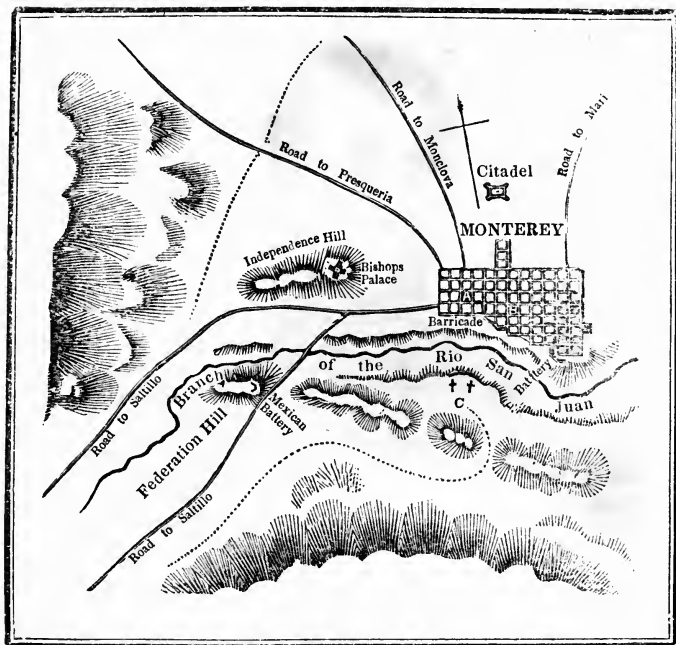
“It is with sentiments of regret I learn your just cause of complaint, founded upon the grounds stated by your excellency. Your excellency must be aware, that it is no easy task to keep such men in subjection, and although my great desire is to maintain good order, yet excesses have been committed; but I believe none of a grave character.

“The volunteers now in the city will be removed in a few days, and by their absence I hope all cause of further complaints will cease. In the meantime Brigadier-General Worth will use all efficacious measures to maintain order in the city. He is now invested with orders to this effect. Your excellency must be aware that my desire is to comply with the guaranties I have given, in the name of my government, relative to the security of persons and property.”

In accordance with the spirit of the above letter, active measures were taken by General Taylor to suppress these outrages, and to discover and punish the perpetrators; and though not altogether successful, yet similar occurrences became far less frequent.



PLAN OF MONTEREY.



References and Explanations.

- A. Plaza de La Capella.
- B. Plazuela de Carne.
- C. American Artillery.

The shaded portion of the town, ten squares in the south-east corner, is the part held by the Mexicans on the morning of the 24th of September, 1846, when they surrendered.

The dotted line represents the route of the Americans.



John E. Wool



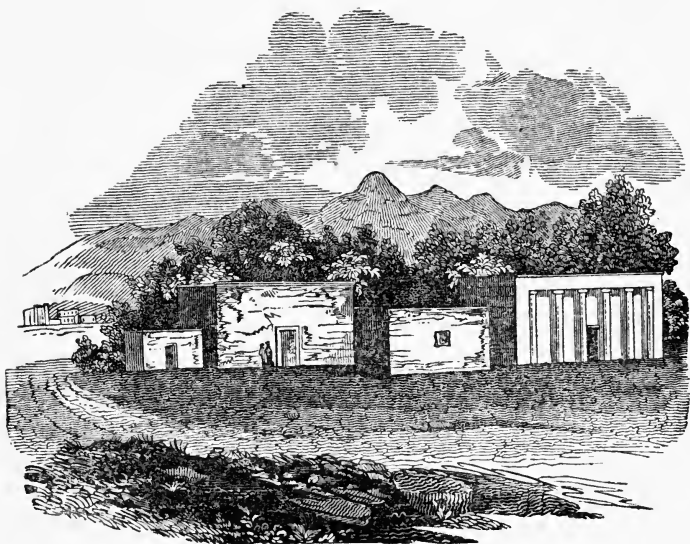
CHAPTER VIII.

Operations in New Mexico and California.



FROM the theatre of war where General Taylor was personally engaged, we now turn our eyes to the north. During the operations on the Rio Grande, just related, as well as subsequent to the fall of Monterey, important movements had taken place in northern Mexico, of which it may not be irrelevant to take a brief notice. Several pretty important battles had been fought, which had placed the "army of invasion" in possession of the provinces of New Mexico, New Leon, Coahuila, Tamaulipas, and the Californias; a territory larger in extent than that embraced in the thirteen original States of the Union, inhabited by a considerable population, and much of it more than a thousand miles from the points at which the Americans collected their forces, and commenced their movements.

Before describing the engagements which took place between



Sante Fe, New Mexico.

the Mexican and American forces, it may not be inappropriate to give an account of the invasion of the above provinces by the Americans. On the 30th of June, 1846, Brigadier-General Kearney, with the force under his command, amounting, in all, to about 1600 men, regulars and volunteers, moved from Fort Leavenworth upon Santa Fé, the capital of New Mexico, where, after a march of eight hundred and seventy-three miles, he arrived on the 18th of August, and took military possession of New Mexico without resistance at his approach. The Mexican forces, about four thousand in number, which had been collected near that city under the late Governor Armijo, to oppose his progress, dispersed, and the governor himself fled with a small command of dragoons in the direction of Chihuahua. Under the apprehension that the force which left Fort Leavenworth in June, might not be sufficient fully to effect the purpose of the expedition, which was, if found practicable, to pass on to California, after conquering and securing New Mexico, General Kearney was author-

ized to organize and muster into service, a battalion of the emigrants which were on their way to Oregon or California. This had been done, and also one thousand additional volunteers from Missouri were sent on as reinforcements, to his disposable force for California ; but they had not yet arrived when he departed for that country.

After making at Sante Fé the necessary arrangements, consequent on the military occupation of New Mexico, General Kearney moved with a part of his force to the village of Tome, about one hundred miles down the Rio Grande. The inhabitants, not only of this place and of Sante Fé, but throughout the whole department of New Mexico, appeared well satisfied with the change that had taken place in the government. No organized resistance to the Americans was apprehended ; all were following their peaceful occupations.*

* Immediately after the occupation of New Mexico, General Kearney issued the following

PROCLAMATION,

To the inhabitants of New Mexico, by Brigadier-General S. W. KEARNEY, commanding the troops of the United States in the same.

As by the act of the republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that government and the United States, and as the undersigned at the head of his troops on the 18th instant, took possession of Sante Fé, the capital of the department of New Mexico, he now announces to hold the department with its original boundaries (on both sides of the Del Norte) as a part of the United States, and under the name of the territory of New Mexico.

The undersigned has come to New Mexico with a strong military force, and an equally strong one is following close in his rear. He has more troops than are necessary to put down any opposition that can possibly be brought against him, and therefore it would be but folly or madness, for any dissatisfied or discontented person to think of resisting him.

The undersigned has instructions from his government to respect the religious institutions of New Mexico, to protect the property of the Church, to cause the worship of those belonging to it to be undisturbed, and their religious rights in the amplest manner reserved to them. Also to protect the persons and property of all quiet and peaceful citizens within its boundaries against their enemies, the Eutaws, Navohoes and others ; and while he assures all, that it will be his pleasure as well as his duty, to comply with those instructions, he calls upon those to exert themselves in preserving order, in promoting concord, and in maintaining the authority and efficiency of the laws ; and to require of those who have left their homes and taken up arms against the troops of the United States, to return forthwith to them, or else they will be considered as enemies and traitors, subjecting their persons to punishment and their property to seizure and confiscation, for the benefit of the public treasury.

It is the wish and intention of the United States to provide for New Mexico a free government with the least possible delay, similar to those in the United States, and the people of New Mexico will then be called on to exercise the

After ordering a part of the volunteers to follow him, General Kearney commenced his march for California, at the head of a regular force of about three hundred dragoons, intending to proceed down the Rio Grande, about two hundred miles from Sante Fé, thence to strike across the Gila, and to move down that river near its mouth, then across the Colorado to the Pacific, where he hoped to arrive about the latter part of November. After proceeding about one hundred and eighty miles from Sante Fé, he was met by an express from California, sent by Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont, informing him of the capture of California by the American land and naval forces. Thinking that an additional force would not be required in California, he directed most of those with him to return to Sante Fé, and accompanied by about one hundred men, repaired forthwith to join the forces under Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont. The prompt and energetic manner in which General Kearney conducted to a successful termination this difficult and distant enterprise, elicited the highest commendation of the executive government of the United States.

For various reasons, it was deemed important by the United States government, that military occupation should be taken of California, and early attention was given to the subject.

For this purpose General Kearney was ordered to proceed with what force he could spare to that country, and a company of United

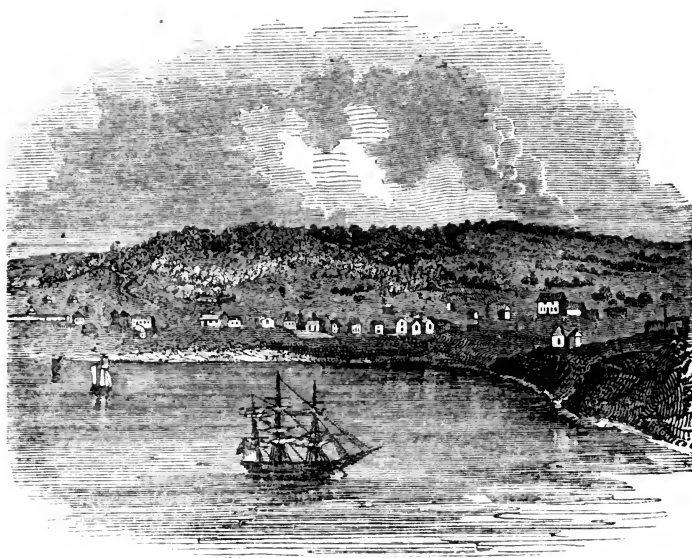
rights of freemen, in electing their own representatives to the territorial legislature; but until this can be done, the laws hitherto in existence will be continued until changed or modified by competent authority, and those persons holding office, will continue in the same for the present, provided they will consider themselves good citizens, and be willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States.

The undersigned hereby absolves all persons residing within the boundaries of New Mexico from further allegiance to the republic of Mexico, and hereby claims them as citizens of the United States. Those who remain quiet and peaceable will be considered as good citizens, and receive protection. Those who are found in arms, or instigating others against the United States, will be considered as traitors, and treated accordingly. Don Manuel Armijo, the late governor of this department, has fled from it. The undersigned has taken possession of it without firing a gun, or spilling a drop of blood, in which he most truly rejoices, and for the present will be considered as *governor* of the territory.

Given at Sante Fé, the capital of the territory of New Mexico, this 23rd of August 1846, and in the 71st year of the independence of the United States.

By the Governor,

S. W. KEARNEY, Brig. Gen.



Monterey, Alta California.

States artillery, and a volunteer company of infantry, from New York, received orders to co-operate with him, by sea. Before, however, the latter companies had left the United States, a small naval force under Commodore Sloat, and a small land force under Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont, had acquired possession of both Californias.

Early in the spring of 1843, Captain John C. Fremont, since Lieutenant-Colonel, was despatched by the War Department upon an exploring expedition to the countries bordering upon the Pacific, and lying westward of the United States. Hardly had he entered California, when he received information that General Castro, with a large force, was advancing to drive him from the territory. Colonel Fremont was in no condition to act against this force; his intentions in entering the territory had been entirely pacific, and his whole force was but sixty-two men: with this little band, however, he determined to await the attack of General Castro, and accordingly took position

on a mountain, distant about thirty miles from Monterey, the capital of California, where he intrenched himself and raised the flag of the United States.

On the 11th of June, 1846, a convoy of two hundred horses for Castro's camp, with an officer, and fourteen men, were surprised and captured by twelve of Colonel Fremont's party. On the 15th, at daybreak, the military pass of Sanoma was also surprised and taken, with nine brass cannon, two hundred and fifty stand of muskets, with some officers, men, and munitions of war.

Leaving a small garrison at Sanoma, Colonel Fremont advanced to the American fork of the Sacramento, eighty miles distant from Sanoma. Scarcely had he arrived there, when an express reached him, that Castro was preparing to attack the little garrison at Sanoma. He immediately set out for that place, and arrived there on the 25th, with ninety riflemen who had been obtained from the American settlers in the valley. A party of twenty was now sent out to reconnoitre; and fell in with a squadron of seventy dragoons, all of Castro's force that had crossed the bay of San Francisco, attacked and defeated it, killing and wounding five, without harm to themselves. Immediately after this defeat, General Castro, with his force, retreated to Santa Clara, an intrenched post on the south side of the bay of San Francisco. His force consisted of four hundred men, with two pieces of field artillery.

The country north of the bay being cleared of the enemy, Colonel Fremont determined to advance and attack General Castro at Santa Clara. On the 6th of July the pursuit was commenced by a body of mounted riflemen, commanded by Colonel Fremont in person, who in three days arrived at the American settlements on the Rio de los Americanos. Here he learned that Castro had abandoned Santa Clara, and was retreating south towards Ciudad de los Angeles, (the city of the Angels,) the seat of the governor-general of the Californias, and distant nearly four hundred miles.

Colonel Fremont instantly resolved to pursue him to that place. At the moment of departure, he received the gratifying intelligence that war had been declared with Mexico; that Monterey, in California, had been taken by a naval force under Commodore Sloat, and the flag of the United States raised there on the 7th of July, and

that the fleet would co-operate in the pursuit of General Castro and his forces.

Shortly after the occupation of Monterey, Commodore Stockton took command of the squadron in the Pacific, and Commodore Sloat sailed for the United States. The combined pursuit of Castro was rapidly continued, and on the 12th of August, Commodore Stockton and Colonel Fremont, with a detachment of marines from the squadron, and some riflemen, entered the "city of the Angels" without resistance; the Governor-General Pico, the Commandant-General Castro, and all the Mexican authorities having fled and dispersed. Commodore Stockton took possession of the whole country as a conquest of the United States, and appointed Colonel Fremont governor, under the law of nations, to assume the functions of that office when he (Stockton) should return to the squadron.

Thus in the short space of sixty days from the first decisive movement, this conquest was achieved by a small body of men, to an extent beyond their most ardent expectations. The Mexican authorities proclaimed it a conquest, not only of the northern provinces, but of the whole of the Californias.

Very little resistance was made to the advances of the Americans in the northern provinces of Mexico, until the beginning of the year 1847, when the inhabitants of New Mexico and Chihuahua made several desperate attempts to recover possession of their soil, but they were defeated in every engagement.

On the 24th of January, 1847, at the village of La Canada, thirty miles from Santa Fe, an engagement took place between a small force of the Americans (290 men) under Colonel Price, and a body of 2000 Mexicans and Indians. As the Americans approached the village, they found the enemy posted on the hills in every direction, and in most advantageous positions. The artillery was soon brought to bear upon them, and the fight lasted about an hour, when the enemy fled over the distant hills so fast that it was found impossible to overtake them. The Americans lost not a single man, while the enemy acknowledged a loss of 36 killed and 45 wounded.

On the 29th, another engagement took place at the village of El Embudo, between a large body of Mexicans and a small force under the command of Captain Bargwin. The Americans had to climb

steep mountains, supporting themselves by the bushes, to dislodge the enemy, who were finally routed with a loss of twenty killed, and about sixty wounded, many of them mortally. The Americans had but one man killed and one wounded.

Another engagement took place on the 3d of February, at the strongly fortified village of Puebla de Taos. The attack commenced about two o'clock, P. M., and was continued until dark. Early on the next morning the battle was renewed, and continued with occasional intervals, until dark, at which time the Americans, with very little loss, had forced their way into the village. The next morning the enemy sued for peace, delivered the government into the hands of the Americans, and thus ended the campaign in New Mexico.

In the department of Chihuahua the Americans met with very little resistance until the early part of the year 1847, when the enemy occupied and fortified the ridge and neighboring heights about Sacramento. Their intrenchments and redoubts commanded the brow of an elevation extending across the ridge between the Arroyo Seco and that of Sacramento—both of which cross the valley from the elevated ridge of mountains in the rear of the village of Torreon, known by the name of the Sierra de Victoriano, that of Nombreo de Dios on the east, and through which runs the Rio del Nombreo de Dios. This valley is about four miles in width, and was intrenched by the Mexicans entirely across from mountain to mountain, the road to the city of Chihuahua running directly through its centre. The Mexican right and left were strong positions—the Sierra Frijoles on their right, having high precipitous sides, with a redoubt commanding the surrounding country, and the pass leading towards Chihuahua, through the Arroyo Seco. On their left, the Sierra Sacramento, consisting of a pile of volcanic rocks, surmounted by a battery, commanded the main road to Chihuahua. Their intrenchments extended nearly two miles, and were supported by 3000 infantry and cavalry. On the 28th of February, a force of the Americans, many times inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, advanced to attack this well fortified position. Crossing the Arroyo Seco, without reach of the enemy's fire, the Americans rapidly advanced towards the table land between the Seco and Sacramento, and before they could be prevented by the enemy, by a rapid movement,

seized upon a favorable position, and at once opened a heavy fire upon a body of the enemy's cavalry that were rapidly advancing to charge their rear.

This fire broke the ranks of the cavalry, and they fled in confusion behind their intrenchments.

The Mexicans now rapidly deployed into line, bringing up their artillery from behind the intrenchments, from which they opened a heavy fire upon the American line, mainly directed upon the battery, but with little effect. The fire of the Americans dismounted one of the enemy's pieces, dispersed the cavalry, and drove the infantry from its position, forcing it again to retire behind the intrenchments. The firing on both sides now ceased for some time, the enemy, during the cessation, removing his cannon and wounded, while the Americans moved towards the right, for the purpose of securing a more advantageous position. The moment this object was gained, a rapid charge was made upon the enemy's left, and a heavy fire of grape and canister opened into his ranks, which was returned, but without effect. The Americans now advanced upon the intrenchments, pouring forth so destructive a fire that the enemy were driven from their breastworks in great confusion. Simultaneously with this, successful charges were made against the right and centre. The Mexicans vacated all of their intrenchments, and, deserting their guns, were hotly pursued towards the mountains beyond the Sierra Frijoles, and down Arroyo Seco la Sacramento, by both wings of the American army. To cover their retreat they had taken the heaviest of the cannon from the intrenchments to the Sierra Sacramento, which now opened a heavy fire upon the pursuing Americans, but it was returned with such briskness and precision that the battery was soon silenced, and the enemy seen precipitately retreating.

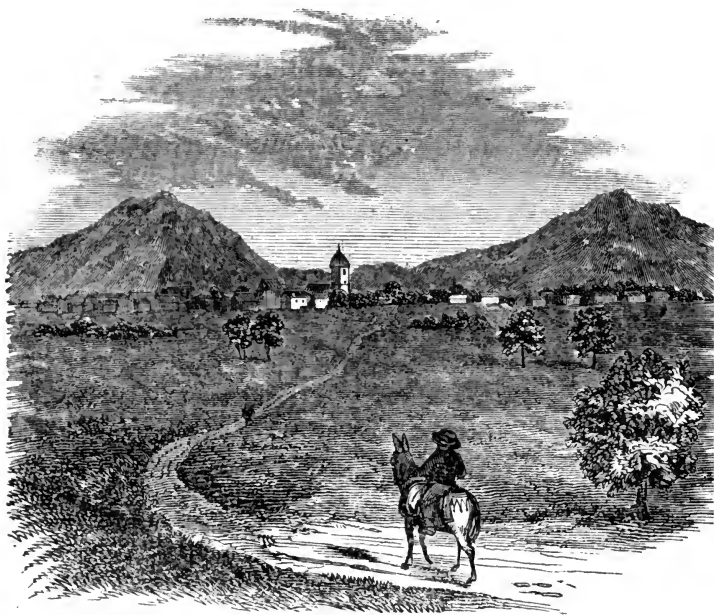
We will now glance at the most important movements of Colonel Doniphan, which we have reserved for a separate paragraph, in order to present them in one view. He had been detached with a party of about six hundred men, of whom one hundred were from Santa Fe, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell, and the remainder were his own troops. On the 25th of December, 1846, he was met by about eleven hundred Mexicans from the city of Chihuahua,

to whom he gave battle. At the commencement of the attack his men were in great confusion, but being called together immediately, and drawn up as infantry, they received three fires from the enemy with great firmness, and then poured forth such a volley as broke the entire line of the enemy. After the third fire Captain Reid made a gallant charge with sixteen mounted men, and killed several of the enemy, and captured some mules and horses, and a mule load of powder. A full account of the battle, which lasted about half an hour, is given in the following report :

DETACHMENT OF MO. LIGHT ARTILLERY,
Camp below Bracito, Rio Grande, Dec. 26, 1846.

DEAR SIR :—I can only write to you a few lines, being upon the point of breaking up camp. Our detachment at Fray Cristobal, overtook Colonel Doniphan's command. Major Gilpin with two hundred and fifty men, had previously left for El Paso, and Colonel Jackson was following with two hundred. Colonel Doniphan had one hundred and fifty men with him, the remainder of his regiment being sick, attending on sick, or detached through the country. From Fray Cristobal our detachment marched with Colonel Doniphan south ; when at the Laguna of the Jornada del Muerte, news reached us through an express sent by Major Gilpin, that the Mexicans had determined to resist at El Paso, and had collected a considerable number of troops, intending to give us battle. An express had been sent to Santa Fe for part of the artillery under Major Clarke, but no news had as yet reached us from them, so that the detachment of thirty men from the three companies of our corps are all that are here from the battalion. At the southern end of the Jornada, ten miles north of Don Ana, the traders had encamped. Contradictory rumors of the enemy's approach reached us daily.

Yesterday, (Christmas,) when we had just arrived in camp here, with about six hundred men, had unsaddled our animals, and most of the men were engaged in carrying wood and water, the news was brought into camp, that the enemy were near, and advancing. It was about two o'clock, P. M., and the day was very pleasant. Our horses grazing some distance from camp, at the time, we formed a single line, and determined to meet the enemy as infantry. Their attack being evidently designed on the left flank, near which



Town of Marin and Pass of Salinas.

was our wagon train, our detachment was ordered from the extreme right to the left, where we soon took up our position. One piece of artillery, four hundred and ninety regular lancers and cavalry, and one hundred regular infantry, besides some five hundred militia troops from El Paso, composed the enemy's forces, according to the best information I can obtain from reports of prisoners and from papers found amongst the baggage on the field of battle. The enemy ranged themselves on the east, within half a mile of our line, the mountains in their rear. In our rear was the river with a little brushwood on its banks.

Previous to the encounter, a lieutenant from the ranks came forward, waving a black flag in his hand, but halted when within one hundred steps of our line. Thomas Caldwell, our interpreter, rode out to meet him. The messenger with the black flag of defiance demanded that the commander should come into their camp and

to speak to their general. The reply was—‘If your general wants to see our commander, let him come here.’ ‘We shall break your ranks then and take him there,’ was the retort of the Mexican. ‘Come and take him,’ said the interpreter, unwittingly using the words of the Spartan at Thermopylæ. ‘A curse on you, prepare for a charge,’ cried the Mexican, ‘we give no quarters and ask none,’ and waving his black flag gracefully over his head, he galloped back towards the enemy’s line. Their charge was made by the dragoons from their right, directed upon our left flank, bringing our detachment into the closest fire. Their infantry, with one howitzer with them, at the same time attacking our right flank.

Their charge was a handsome one, but was too well, too coolly met to break our line. After their fire had been spent, their front column being at about one hundred steps from the front of our flank, our line poured a volley into them, which being a few times repeated, created such havoc in their columns, that their forces wheeled to the left, retreating from our fire, and in their flight made an attack on the provision train. Here they met with a very warm reception, and were soon compelled to fly in all directions, and in the utmost confusion. Their infantry having been put to flight, the Howard company, under the command of Lieutenant N. Wright, taking advantage of the panic, charged upon them, and captured their cannon, which was soon manned by the artillery detachment, under Lieutenant Kribben, in Colonel Mitchell’s escort. The enemy had by this time fled, leaving their arms, baggage, provisions, and other stores on the field of battle.

A small body of mounted men, under the command of Captain Reid, had by this time gathered together in a line, and charged upon the enemy, pursuing them into the mountains, where they sought refuge. The number of their dead is said to be at least thirty, that of their wounded was slight, as far as ascertained. Had we had a single piece of cannon with us, they would have lost more of their men, but having no artillery on our side, we had to act as infantry until we got possession of the howitzer so gallantly captured by the Howard company.

We lost not a single man, and had but seven slightly wounded, took eight prisoners, six of whom died last night. Thus ended

the battle of Bracito, the first battle of the army of the west, and as bravely fought by our men as ever men fought at any engagement."

The force which engaged Colonel Doniphan was undoubtedly part of a large number of troops who had been appointed to aid the dissatisfied of New Mexico, in their opposition to the lately established American government. A plan for that purpose had long been in operation among the greater portion of the inhabitants, but after some of the leaders were detected, it was in a great measure broken up.

After the battle, the Americans hastened toward La Paso, in the hope of overtaking a large body of Mexicans, said to be posted there. He took possession of the pass with but little trouble, and was soon joined by Major M. Lewis Clarke, which augmented his force to nearly one thousand men. His attack upon the city of Chihuahua, with this force, detailed in his official report, as follows :

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY IN CHIHUAHUA,
City of Chihuahua, March 4th, 1847.

I have the honor to report to you the movements of the army under my command since my last official report.

On the evening of the 8th of February, 1847, we left the town of El Paso del Norte, escorting the merchant train or caravan of about three hundred and fifteen wagons for the city of Chihuahua. Our force consisted of nine hundred and twenty-four effective men, one hundred and seventeen officers and privates of the artillery, ninety-three of Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell's escort, and the remainder the first regiment Missouri mounted volunteers. We progressed in the direction of this place until the 25th, when we were informed by our spies that the enemy, to the number of fifteen hundred men were at Inseneas, the country-seat of Governor Trias, about twenty-five miles in advance.

When we arrived on the evening of the 26th near that point, we found that the force had retreated in the direction of this city. We were also informed that there was no water between the point we were at and that occupied by the enemy; we therefore determined to halt until morning. At sunrise on the 28th, the last day of

February, we took up the line of march, and formed the whole train, consisting of three hundred and fifteen heavy traders' wagons and our commissary and company wagons, into four columns, thus shortening our line so as to make it more easily protected. We placed the artillery, and all the command except two hundred cavalry proper in the intervals between the columns of wagons. We thus fully concealed our force and its position, by masking our force with the cavalry. When we arrived within three miles of the enemy, we made a reconnoissance of his position, and of the arrangement of his forces. This we could easily do—the road leading through an open prairie valley between sterile mountains. The pass of the Sacramento is formed by a point of the mountains on our right, their left extending into the valley or plain so as to narrow the valley to about one mile and a half. On our left was a deep, dry, sandy channel of a creek, and between these points the plain rises to sixty feet abruptly. This rise is in the form of a crescent, the convex part being to the north of our forces. On the right from the point of mountains, a narrow part of the plain extends north one mile and a half further than on the left. The main road passes down the centre of the valley and across the crescent, near the left or dry branch. The Sacramento rises in the mountains on the right, and the road falls on to it about one mile below the battle-field or intrenchment of the enemy. We ascertained that the enemy had one battery of four guns, two nine and six pounders, on the point of the mountain to our right (their left) at a good elevation to sweep the plain, and at a point where the mountains extended farthest into the plain. On our left they had another battery on an elevation commanding the road, and three intrenchments of two six pounders; and on the brow of the crescent, near the centre, another of two six and two four, and six culverins or rampart pieces mounted on carriages; and on the crest of the hill, or ascent between the batteries, and on the right and left they had twenty-seven redoubts dug and thrown up, extending at short intervals across the whole ground. In these their infantry were placed, and were entirely protected. Their cavalry was drawn up in front of the redoubts in the intervals four deep, and in the front of the redoubts two deep, so as to mask them as far as possible. When we had arrived within one and a half miles of the

intrenchments along the main road, we advanced the cavalry still farther, and suddenly diverged with the columns to the right, so as to gain the narrow part of our ascent on our right, which the enemy discovering, endeavored to prevent by moving forward with one thousand cavalry, and four pieces of cannon in their rear, masked by them. Our movements were so rapid, that we gained the elevation with our forces and the advance of our wagons in time to form before they arrived within reach of our guns. The enemy halted, and we advanced the head of our column within twelve hundred yards of them, so as to let our wagons attain the highlands and form as before.

We now commenced the action by a brisk fire from our battery, and the enemy unmasked and commenced also. Our fires proved effective at this distance, killing fifteen men, wounding others, and disabling one of the enemy's guns. We had two men slightly wounded, and several horses and mules killed. The enemy then slowly retreated behind their works in some confusion, and we resumed our march in our former order, still diverging more to the right to avoid their battery on our left (their right,) and their strongest redoubts, which were on the left near where the road passes. After marching as far as we safely could without coming in range of their heavy battery on our right, Captain Weightman of the artillery was ordered to charge with the two twelve pound howitzers, to be supported by the cavalry under Captains Reid, Parsons, and Hudson. The howitzers charged at full speed, and were gallantly sustained by Captain Reid, but by some misunderstanding my order was not given to the other two companies. Captain Hudson anticipating my order, charged in time to give ample support to the howitzers. Captain Parsons at the same moment came to me and asked permission for his company to charge the redoubts immediately to the left of Captain Weightman, which he did very gallantly. The remainder of the two battalions of the first regiment were dismounted during the cavalry charge, and following rapidly on foot, and Major Clarke advancing as fast as practicable with the remainder of the battery, we charged their redoubts from right to left with a brisk and deadly fire of riflemen; while Major Clarke opened a rapid and well directed fire on a column of cavalry attempting to pass to our left so

as to attack the wagons and our rear. The fire was so well directed as to force them to fall back, and our riflemen, with the cavalry and howitzers cleared after an obstinate resistance. Our forces advanced to the very brink of their redoubts, and attacked them with their sabres. When the redoubts were cleared, and the batteries in the centre and on our left were silenced, the main battery on our right still continued to pour in a constant and heavy fire as it had done during the heat of the engagement, but as the whole fate of the battle depended upon carrying the redoubts and centre battery, this one on the right remained unattacked, and the enemy had rallied there five hundred strong.

Major Clarke was directed to commence a heavy fire upon it, while Lieutenant-Colonels Mitchell and Jackson, commanding the first battalion, were ordered to remount and charge the battery on the left, while Major Gilpin was directed to pass the second battalion on foot up the rough ascent of the mountain on the opposite side. The fire of our battery was so effective, as to completely silence theirs, and the rapid advance of our column put them to flight over to the mountains in great confusion.

Captain Thompson of the first dragoons acted as my aid and adviser on the field during the whole engagement, and was of the most essential service to me ; also Lieutenant Wooster of the United States army, who acted very coolly and gallantly. Major Campbell, of Springfield, Missouri, also acted as a volunteer aid during part of the time, but left me and joined Captain Reid in his gallant charge. Thus ended the battle of Sacramento. The force of the enemy was twelve hundred cavalry from Durango and Chihuahua, with the Vera Cruz dragoons, twelve hundred infantry from Chihuahua, three hundred artillerists, and fourteen hundred and twenty rancheros, badly armed with lassos, lances, and machitoes, or corn knives ; ten pieces of artillery, two nine, two eight, four six, and two four pounders, and six culverins or rampart pieces. Their forces were commanded by Major-General Hendea, general of Durango, Chihuahua, Sonora, and New Mexico ; Brigadier-General Jastimani, Brigadier-General Garcia Conde, formerly minister of war for the republic of Mexico, who is a scientific man, and planned this whole field of defence ; General Uguerte, and Governor Trias, who acted

as a brigadier-general on the field, and colonels and other officers without number.

Our force was nine hundred and twenty-four effective men, at least one hundred of whom were engaged in holding horses and driving teams. The loss of the enemy was his entire artillery, ten wagons, masses of beans and pinola, and other Mexican provisions, about three hundred killed, and about the same number wounded, many of whom have since died, and forty prisoners.

The field was literally covered with the dead and wounded from our artillery, and the unerring fire of our riflemen. Night put a stop to the carnage, the battle having commenced about three o'clock. Our loss was one killed, one mortally wounded, and seven so wounded as to recover without any loss of limbs. I cannot speak too highly of the coolness, gallantry, and bravery of the officers and men under my command.

I was ably sustained by the field officers Lieutenant-Colonels Mitchell and Jackson of the first battalion, and Major Gilpin of the second battalion. Major Clarke and his artillery acted nobly, and did the most effective service in every part of the field. It is abundantly shown in the charge made by Captain Weightman with the section of howitzers, that they can be used in any charge of cavalry with great effect. Much has been said, and justly said, of the gallantry of our artillery unlimbering within two hundred and fifty yards of the enemy at Palo Alto; but how much more daring was the charge of Captain Weightman, when he unlimbered within fifty yards of the redoubts of the enemy.

On the 1st day of March we took formal possession of the capital of Chihuahua in the name of our government. We were ordered by General Kearney to report to General Wool at this place. Since our arrival we hear he is at Saltillo, surrounded by the enemy. Our present purpose is either to force our way to him, or to return by Bexar, as our term of service expires on the last day of May next.

I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

A. W. DONIPHAN,
Colonel 1st Regt. Mo. Vol.

Brig. Gen. R. JONES, Adjt. Gen. U. S. A.

The following is a translation of Colonel Doniphan's proclamation to the inhabitants of the newly conquered province.

PROCLAMATION,

Of the Commander-in-chief of the North American forces in Chihuahua.

The Commander-in-chief of the American forces in Chihuahua announces to all the citizens of that state, that he has taken military possession of the capital, and has the pleasure of assuring them that in it complete tranquillity exists.

He invites all the citizens to return to their houses, and continue in their ordinary occupations, promising to them security of person, property, and religion.

He declares also in the name of his government, that having taken possession of the capital since he conquered the forces of the state, he holds possession of the whole state.

He invites all the citizens, pueblos, and rancheros to continue their trade, coming to this capital to buy and sell just as they did before recent occurrences, for no one will be molested or annoyed in any thing, as he before has explained; that the property of each person will be respected, and that in case the troops of his command need any thing, the value of it will be paid at its just price with all punctuality.

He pledges himself in like manner that the American troops will punish promptly every excess committed either by the savage Indians or any other individuals.

He again assures all good citizens, that we war only against the army, and not against individual citizens who are unarmed. For this we exact only, not that any Mexican should take up arms against his country, but that in case of actual war he should remain neutral; for it must not, on the contrary, be expected that we shall respect the rights of those who take up arms against our views.

ALEXANDER W. DONIPHAN,
General-in-Chief.

The following letter defines the instructions of the colonel, as well as his situation after the action of Sacramento.

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY IN CHIHUAHUA,
City of Chihuahua, March 20th, 1847.

SIR:—The forces under my command are a portion of the Missouri volunteers, called into service for the purpose of invading New Mexico, under the command of Brigadier-General Kearney. After the conquest of New Mexico, and before General Kearney's departure for California, information was received that another regiment, and an extra battalion of Missouri volunteers, would follow us to Santa Fe. The service of so large a force being wholly unnecessary in that state, I prevailed on General Kearney to order my regiment to report to you at this city. The order was given on the 23d of September, 1846, but after the general arrived at La Jua, in the southern part of the state, he issued an order requiring my regiment to make a campaign into the country inhabited by the Navejo Indians, lying between the waters of the Rio del Norte and the Rio Colorado of the west. This campaign detained me until the 14th of December, before our return to the Del Norte. We immediately commenced our march for El Paso del Norte, with about eight hundred riflemen. All communications between Chihuahua and New Mexico were entirely prevented. On the 25th of December, 1846, my van-guard was attacked at Brazito by the Mexican forces from this state. Our force was about four hundred and fifty, and the force of the enemy eleven hundred. The engagement lasted about forty minutes, when the enemy fled, leaving sixty-three killed and since dead, one hundred and fifty wounded, and one howitzer, the only piece of artillery in the engagement on either side. On the 29th we entered El Paso without further opposition, and from the prisoners and others I learned that you had not marched upon this state. I then determined to order a battery and a hundred artillerists from New Mexico. They arrived at El Paso on the 5th of February, when we took up the line of march for this place. A copy of my official report of the battle of Sacramento, enclosed to you, will show you all our subsequent movements up to our taking military possession of this capital. The day of my arrival I had determined to send an express to you forthwith, but the whole intermediate country

was in the hands of the enemy, and we were cut off, and had been for many months, from all information respecting the American army. Mexican reports are never to be fully credited, yet from all we could learn, we did not doubt that you would be forced by overwhelming numbers to abandon Saltillo, and of course we could send no express under such circumstances. On yesterday we received the first even tolerably reliable information, that a battle had been fought near Saltillo between the American and Mexican forces, and that Santa Anna had probably fallen back on San Louis de Potosi.

My position here is exceedingly embarrassing. In the first place, most of the men under my command have been in service since the 1st of June, and have never received one cent of pay. Their marches have been hard, especially in the Navajo country, and no forage; so that they are literally without horses, clothes, or money—nothing but arms and a disposition to use them. They are all volunteers, officers and men, and although ready for any hardships or danger, are wholly unfit to garrison a town or city. “It is confusion, worse confounded.” Having performed a march of more than two thousand miles, and their term of service rapidly expiring, they are restless to join the army under your command. Still we cannot leave this point safely for some days—the American merchants here oppose it violently, and have several hundred thousand dollars at stake. They have sent me a memorial, and my determination has been made known to them. A copy of both they will send you. Of one thing it is necessary to inform you. The merchants admit that their goods could not be sold here in five years: if they go south they will be as near to the markets of Durango and Zacatecas as they now are. I am anxious and willing to protect the merchants as far as practicable, but I protest against remaining here as a mere wagon guard, to garrison a city with troops wholly unfitted for it, and who will soon be wholly ruined by improper indulgences. Having been originally ordered to this point, you know the wishes of the government in relation to it, and of course your orders will be promptly and cheerfully obeyed. I fear there is ample use for us with you, and we would greatly prefer joining you before our term of service expires.

All information relative to my previous operations, present con-

dition, &c., will be given you by Mr. J. Collins, the bearer of these despatches. He is a highly honorable gentleman, and was an amateur soldier at Sacramento.

The Mexicans report your last battle as having been highly favorable to themselves, but taking it for granted that they never report the truth, we have fired a salute for our victory, in honor of yourself and General Taylor, presuming from report that you were both present.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. W. DONIPHAN,
Comd'g 1st Regt. Missouri Mounted Volunteers.
Brig. Gen. Wool, U. S. A.

The following excellent remarks upon this expedition of Colonel Doniphan, we copy from the New York Evening Post. When all the circumstances are carefully weighed, we think the eulogy will be considered as very little overwrought.

XENOPHON AND DONIPHAN.—These are the names of two military commanders who have made the most extraordinary marches, known in the annals of the warfare of their times. Colonel Xenophon, as, in modern phrase, he has justly a right to be called, lived about one hundred years earlier than the Christian era. Born in Greece, and educated under Socrates as a favorite pupil, he, at the age of nearly forty years, joined a regiment of Greeks who had enlisted under Cyrus the younger, for a campaign, as it was pretended, against the Pisidians, but in reality against Persia, as the Greeks soon discovered after their march had begun. The object of Cyrus, as our readers well know, was to dethrone his brother, the king of Persia. After a long march through Asia Minor, Syria, and the sandy tract east of the Euphrates, the two brothers met at Cunaxa, not far from Babylon. Cyrus fell in the almost bloodless battle that ensued, his barbarian troops were discouraged and dispersed, and the Greeks were left alone in the centre of the Persian empire. The Greek officers were soon massacred by the treachery of the Persians. Xenophon stepped forward, and soon became one of the most active leaders, and under his judicious guidance the Greeks effected their retreat northward across the high lands of

Armenia, and arrived at Trebisond, on the southeast coast of the Black Sea.

From thence they proceeded to Chrysopolis, opposite Constantinople. Both Colonel Xenophon and the regiment, consisting of about five hundred men, were greatly distressed, having lost almost every thing excepting their lives and their arms. The length of the entire march of the Greek force, as nearly as we can now estimate it, was three thousand four hundred and sixty-five English miles. It was accomplished in fifteen months, and a large part of it through an unknown, mountainous, and hostile country, and in an inclement season. The history of this march has survived the ravages of two thousand years, and as one of the best productions of a Greek scholar, is now used as a text book in our schools.

Turning now to the wonderful march of Colonel Doniphan, we find the first regiment of Missouri mounted volunteers mustered into the service of the United States at Fort Leavenworth, on the 6th of June, last year, and on the 22d of the same month they commenced their march across the plains for Mexico. After a march of fifty-seven days duration they entered Santa Fe. On the 16th of the present month, we find this regiment at New Orleans, about to be discharged, as their enlistment for a year was nearly expired. In the mean time this body of men had fought three battles, viz : Brazito, Sacramento, and El Paso. That of Brazito was on Christmas day, and opened an entrance into El Paso del Norte. The Mexicans had twelve hundred and fifty men, and one piece of artillery ; the Americans four hundred and twenty-five infantry ; the piece of cannon was captured, and the Mexican army entirely destroyed. That of Sacramento was fought on the 28th of February. This battle—one of the most remarkable in the war, is familiar through the reports of Colonel Doniphan and other field officers. The battle of El Paso was fought about the 13th of May, by the advanced guard under Captain Reid ; the Americans had twenty-five men, and the Camanches sixty-five. The Indians were routed, and left seventeen bodies on the field. Three hundred and fifty head of cattle, twenty-five Mexican prisoners, and a great deal of Mexican plunder were captured.

The battle of Sacramento lasted three hours and a half, and the

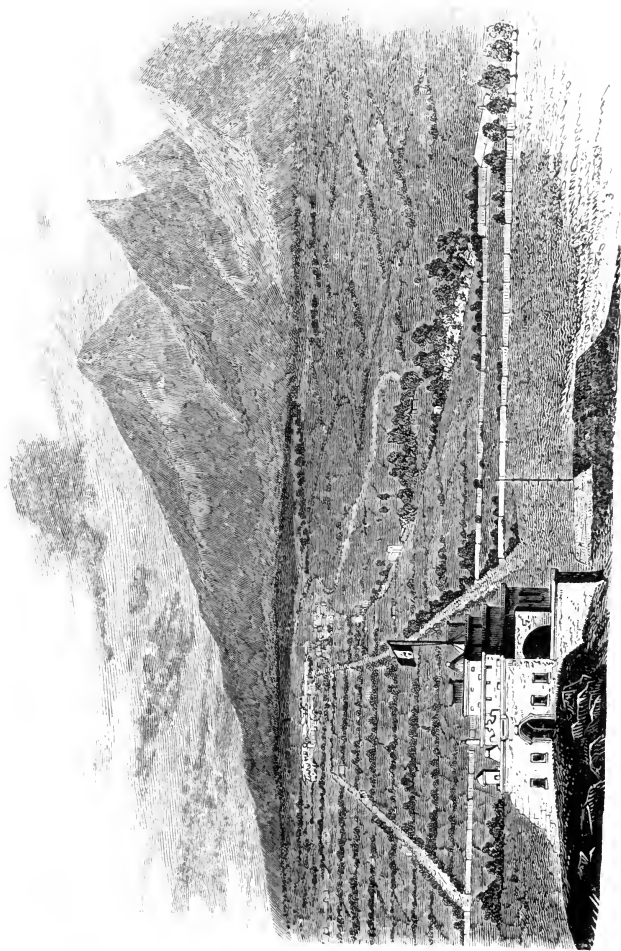
slaughter of the Mexican army continued until night put an end to the chase. The men returned to the battle field after dark, completely worn out and exhausted with fatigue. The Mexicans lost three hundred men killed on the field, and a large number of wounded, perhaps four hundred or five hundred, and sixty or seventy prisoners, together with a vast quantity of provisions, several thousand dollars in money, fifty thousand head of sheep, fifteen hundred head of cattle, one hundred mules, twenty wagons, twenty or thirty carts, twenty-five thousand pounds of ammunition, eleven pieces of cannon, mostly brass six pounders, six wall pieces, one hundred stand of arms, one hundred stand of colors, and many other things of less note.

This body of men conquered the states of New Mexico and Chihuahua, and traversed Durango and New Leon. In this march they travelled more than six thousand miles, consuming twelve months. During all this time not one word of information reached them from the government, nor any order whatsoever; they neither received any supplies of any kind, or one cent of pay. They lived exclusively on the country through which they passed, and supplied themselves with powder and balls by capturing them from the enemy. From Chihuahua to Matamoras, a distance of nine hundred miles, they marched in forty-five days, bringing with them seventeen pieces of heavy artillery as trophies.

It must be confessed that in many very important particulars these two expeditions differ from each other. One was the march of a conqueror, the other was the retreat of an inferior force. One was made on horseback, and the other on foot, and at an inclement season of the year. One was made at an early age of the world, when military science was undeveloped, the other was made with all the advantages of modern improvements. But our object is not so much to draw a comparison between these two expeditions as to notice the circumstance that these two men, whose names are in sound so similar, have each performed the most wonderful march in the annals of warfare. If Colonel Doniphan will now imitate the example of Colonel Xenophon, and give to the world as charming and as perfect a history of his expedition as the latter has done, mankind two thousand years hence, will admire and honor him.

Such is the rapid and able sketch of this famous march, as given in the paper above quoted. The grand outline is readily filled up by the imagination of the reader. The long, long days of weary marching—the earnest longing for the sight of an enemy—the fierce encounter, hand to hand—the rout and flight of the enemy—the rejoicing of the conquerors over captured posts and cities—the sufferings of the wounded on the toilsome march—the hunger and thirst of their progress over desolate mountains and arid plains ;—these form the light and shadow and the coloring of this grand historical picture.





Monterey from the Bishop's Palace.



CHAPTER IX.

General Taylor at Monterey.



AT the time when the important operations recorded in the last chapter were in progress, events scarcely less important had been transpiring at the capital of Mexico. As is ever the case with a revolutionary people, the ill success of their forces on the Rio Grande, had been attributed to the intentional fault of the rulers; and the same party who had been instrumental

in the promotion of General Paredes to the presidential dignity, now clamored loudly for his removal. Mexico presented a scene of

disorder and anarchy, and amid the chaotic mass of revolutions, the president was hurried from his office to give place to his successful opponent Jose Mariano de Salas. Paredes advanced toward Queretaro, accompanied by fifty lancers, and a few military friends : but on his way he was intercepted, by a detachment of five hundred troops, and conveyed as a prisoner to the castle of Perote. While



General Santa Anna.

at the capital his situation was not at all enviable ; many were desirous of having him executed as a traitor, and but for the interference of General Salas, who subsequently referred his case to Santa Anna, this would probably have been done. The ex-president subsequently escaped, and fled to Havana.

This state of things seems to have been only the harbinger of a more important movement, whose object was to restore to favor one, who, although he had long been known only as a doomed and

exiled traitor, yet now seems to have inspired a great majority of the Mexican people with the utmost confidence and enthusiasm towards him. This was Lopez de Santa Anna. He was recalled to Mexico, soon after the active operations on the Rio Grande, and landed in Vera Cruz on the 16th of August, notwithstanding that port was then blockaded by the American Gulf squadron under Commodore Conner. He was here welcomed by the two sons of Salas, who had been sent by the president, expressly to welcome him. Salas was an ardent admirer of Santa Anna, and declared that he held the government only as his representative.

Soon after the arrival of this celebrated character, Salas issued a proclamation commanding Congress to convene, on the 6th of December, in order to re-establish the old Constitution of 1824, and affirming that constitution to be in the meanwhile in operation.

While at Vera Cruz, Santa Anna published an address to the people of Mexico, dated August 16th, in which he expatiated at large on his former excellent government, the miseries brought on by misrule since his banishment, the plans he intended to pursue for the purpose of national regeneration; the whole concluded with enthusiastic appeals to Mexican pride and patriotism. This address was conceived in good style, and is far more temperate, both in thought and language, than most Mexican proclamations. Some time after the issue of this paper, its author remained at his *hacienda*, near Vera Cruz, in order to recruit his health. He left in September for the capital, and on the 14th reached Ayotla, a small town within about forty miles of Mexico. Here he received a communication from Almonte, the *ad interim* secretary of war, proposing to him the supreme executive power or dictatorship, in the name of the provisional government of Salas.

We insert the reply in full, as it exhibits not only the character of the man, but also the popular feeling toward the United States.

General SANTA ANNA, Commander-in-chief of the Liberating Army, to General ALMONTE, Minister of War of the Republic of Mexico.

Ayotla, 1 o'clock A. M., Sept. 14th, 1846.

SIR:—I have received your favor of this date, acknowledging a decree issued by the supreme government of the nation, embracing a programme of the proceedings adopted to regulate a due celebration

of the re-establishment of the constitution of 1824 ; the assumption by myself of the supreme executive power, and the anniversary of the glorious cry of Dolores.

My satisfaction is extreme to observe the enthusiasm with which preparations are made, to celebrate the two great blessings which have fallen upon this nation—her independence and her liberty ; and I am penetrated with the deepest gratitude to find that my arrival at the capital will be made to contribute to the solemnities of so great an occasion. In furtherance of this subject, I shall make my entry into the city to-morrow, at mid-day, and desire in contributing my share to the national jubilee, to observe such a course as shall best accord with my duties to my country—beloved of my heart—and with the respect due to the will of the sovereign people.

I have been called by the voice of my fellow citizens, to exercise the office of commander-in-chief of the army of the republic. I was far from my native land when intelligence of this renewed confidence, and of these new obligations imposed upon me by my country, was brought to me, and I saw the imminent dangers which surrounded her on all sides, and which formed the chief motive for calling me to the head of the army. I now see a terrible contest with a perfidious and daring enemy impending over her, in which the Mexican republic must reconquer the insignia of her glory, and a fortunate issue if victorious, or disappear from the face of the earth if so unfortunate as to be defeated. I also see a treacherous faction raising its head from her bosom, which in calling up a form of government detested by the united nation, provokes a preferable submission to foreign dominion ; and I behold at last, that after much vacillation, that nation is resolved to establish her right to act for herself, and to arrange such a form of government as best suits her wishes.

All this I have observed, and turned a listening ear to the cry of my desolated country, satisfied that she really needed my weak services at so important a period. Hence I have come without hesitation or delay to place myself, in subjection to her will, and, desirous to be perfectly understood upon reaching my native soil I gave a full and public expression of my sentiments and principles. The reception which they met convinced me that I had not deceived myself,

and I am now the more confirmed in them, not from having given them more consideration, but because they have found a general echo in the hearts of my fellow citizens.

I come then to carry my views into operation, and in compliance with the mandate of my country. She calls me as commander-in-chief of the army, and in that capacity I stand ready to serve. The enemy occupies our harbors—he is despoiling us of the richest of our territories, and threatens us with his domination. I go then to the head of the Mexican army, an army the offspring of a free people—and joined with it I will fulfil my utmost duty in opposing the enemy of my country. I will die fighting, or lead the valiant Mexicans to the enjoyment of a triumph to which they are alike entitled by justice, by their warlike character, and by the dignity and enthusiasm which they have preserved of a free nation. The war is a necessity of immediate importance; every day's delay is an age of infamy; I cannot recede from the position which the nation has assigned me; I must go forward unless I would draw upon myself the censure due to ingratitude for the favors with which I have been overwhelmed by my fellow citizens; or, unless I would behold her humbled, and suffering under a perpetuation of her misfortunes.

Your excellency will at once perceive how great an error I should commit in assuming the supreme magistracy, when my duty calls me to the field to fight against the enemies of the republic.

I should disgrace myself if, when called to the point of danger I should spring to that of power! Neither my loyalty nor my honor requires the abandonment of interests so dear to me. The single motive of my heart is to offer my compatriots the sacrifice of that blood which yet runs in my veins. I wish them to know that I consecrate myself entirely to their service, as a soldier ought to do, and am only further desirous to be permitted to point out the course by which Mexico may attain the rank to which her destinies call her.

In marching against the enemy, and declining to accept of power, I give a proof of the sincerity of my sentiments; leaving the nation her own mistress, at liberty to dispose of herself as she sees fit. The elections for members of congress to form the constitution which the people wish to adopt, are proceeding. That congress will now soon

convene, and while I shall be engaged in the conflict, in armed defence of her independence, the nation will place such safeguards around her liberties as may best suit herself.

If I should permit myself for a single moment to take the reins of government, the sincerity of my promises will be rendered questionable, and no confidence could be placed in them.

I am resolved that they shall not be falsified, for in their redemption I behold the general good, as well as my honor as a Mexican and a soldier: I cannot abandon this position. The existing government has pursued a course with which the nation has shown itself content, and I have no desire to subvert it by taking its place. I feel abundant pleasure in remaining where I am, and flatter myself that the nation will applaud my choice. I shall joyfully accept such tasks as she shall continue to impose upon me; and while she is engaged in promoting the objects of civilization, I will brave every danger in supporting its benefit even at the cost of my existence.

Will your excellency have the goodness to tender to the supreme government my sincere thanks for their kindness? I will personally repeat them to-morrow, for which purpose I propose to call at the palace. I shall there embrace my friends, and hastily pressing them to my heart bid them a tender farewell, and set out for the scene of war, to lend my aid to serve my country, or to perish among the ruins.

I beg to continue to your excellency assurances of my continued and especial esteem.

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

On the morning of the 15th the new dictator entered the capital amid the wildest demonstrations of popular enthusiasm. The people regarded him as their saviour, perfectly *invincible* in battle, and manifested the most unbounded attachment and veneration to his person, and his health was universally drunk in full flowing cups.

He immediately commenced arranging a plan of extensive operations to raise money and forces for the conduct of the war. Previous to this, the following decrees had been circulated by General Salas in every part of Mexico, with a view of furthering the same object:

Decrees (in substance) of August 28.—1. Declaring that all Mexicans between the ages of eighteen and fifty years were under



Mexicans Drinking Santa Anna's Health.

obligations to take up arms in defence of their country, whenever required to do so.

2. Declaring free from import duty for one year, the importation into any part of the republic, as well as the sale in it, of muskets, carbines, sabres, brass and iron cannon, with gun carriages, and in general, every species of warlike arms and projectiles; and declaring that the government will purchase such quantity of the arms and projectiles referred to, as it may require, and at such prices as may be agreed upon by the importer or holders.

3. Declaring an extraordinary contingent of 30,000 men, to be contributed by the several states.

4. Giving pardon to all who may have deserted from the regular army, provided that they give themselves up within three months, and permitting them to serve in such corps as they may select.

Decree of August 31st, issued through the department of state, Declaring that all officers in civil or military employment, who shall refuse, without good cause in the opinion of the government, to render such services as may be required of them during the war in which the republic is at present engaged, shall be dismissed from

their employments, and declared incapable of being employed hereafter as military officers ; being liable, moreover, to the punishment already provided by law for such offences as they may have committed.

The people hailed these decrees with enthusiasm, and troops and provisions poured into San Luis so abundantly that the Dictator soon found himself at the head of nearly twenty thousand men. "The magazines of powder," says a Mexican paper, "and the stores of balls and other missiles, are said to exceed belief. Every piece of iron that could be found, is converted into pikes or other deadly weapons. In one storehouse alone there are two hundred mechanics working day and night, mounting guns and manufacturing munitions of war. There are five hundred more at work on the fortifications, which are being strengthened in every possible manner. One thousand women, filled with enthusiasm in the national cause, had come down to the camp from San Diego and Tlascala to aid in making articles for the soldiers, and working on the fortifications. In one store there has been sold sixteen thousand daggers, bought by the country people, both men and women. In every direction we see them making lances, sharpening swords, and fixing fire-arms and other warlike arrangements."

As we have stated, General Taylor remained for some time inactive at Monterey ; but upon learning the approach of a formidable Mexican army, he fortified himself more securely, and made every preparation for the expected visit. The enemy, however, not appearing, and there being the most pressing necessity for active operations, the General formed the bold plan of penetrating further into the enemy's country, and fighting him, if possible, on his own ground.

On the 15th of December, the American army left Monterey, and proceeded toward Victoria, near which General Taylor expected to find a Mexican force under General Urrea. On the 17th, he was joined by the second regiment of infantry, and the second Tennessee regiment of foot, who had marched from Camargo. At Matamoros he received news from General Worth, that an attack by Santa Anna was daily expected at Saltillo ; he, therefore, fell back

on Monterey, after having despatched General Quitman with a field battery to join General Patterson at Saltillo.

General Wool now arrived at that place with reinforcements, and the enemy retired toward San Luis Potosi. General Taylor received intelligence of these movements while on his march to Saltillo, and immediately resuming his original plan, reached Victoria on the 30th.

While at this place the General received the following letter from Major-General Scott, written before the latter set out for Mexico ; its object is explained by the terms.

NEW YORK, Nov. 25, 1846.

MY DEAR GENERAL :—I left Washington late in the day yesterday, and expect to embark for New Orleans the 30th instant. By the 12th of December I may be in that city, at Point Isabel the 17th, and Camargo, say the 23d, in order to be within easy corresponding distance from you. It is not probable that I may be able to visit Monterey, and circumstances may prevent your coming to me. I shall much regret not having an early opportunity of felicitating you in person, upon your many brilliant achievements ; but we may meet somewhere in the interior of Mexico.

I am not coming, my dear General, to supersede you in the immediate command, on the line of operations, rendered illustrious by you and your gallant army. My proposed theatre is different. You may imagine it ; and I wish very much that it were prudent, at this distance, to tell you all I expect to attempt, or hope to execute. I have been admonished that despatches have been lost, and I have no special messenger at hand. Your imagination will be aided by the letters of the Secretary of War, conveyed by Mr. Armistead, Major Graham, and Mr. McLane.

But, my dear General, I shall be obliged to take from you most of the gallant officers and men, (regulars and volunteers,) whom you have so long and so nobly commanded. I am afraid that I shall by imperious necessity—the approach of yellow fever on the Gulf coast—reduce you for a while to stand on the defensive. This will be infinitely painful to you, and for that reason distressing to me. But I rely upon your patriotism to submit to the temporary sacrifice with cheerfulness. No man can better afford to do so. Recent

victories place you on that high eminence ; and I even flatter myself that any benefit that may result to me personally from the unequal division of troops alluded to, will lessen the pain of your consequent inactivity.

You will be aware of the recent call for nine regiments of new volunteers, including one of Texas horse. The President may soon ask for many more, and we are not without hope that congress may add ten or twelve to the regular establishment. These by the spring, say April, may by the aid of large bounties, be in the field, should Mexico not earlier propose terms of accommodation ; and long before the spring (March) it is probable you will be again in force, to resume offensive operations.

It was not possible for me to find time to write from Washington, as I much desired. I only received an intimation to hold myself in preparation for Mexico, on the 18th instant. Much has been done towards that end, and more remains to be executed.

Your detailed report of the operations at Monterey, and reply to the Secretary's despatch by Lieutenant Armistead, were both received, two days after I was instructed to proceed south.

In haste, I remain, my dear General,

Yours, faithfully,

WINFIELD SCOTT.

Major-General Z. TAYLOR,
U. S. Army, commanding, &c.

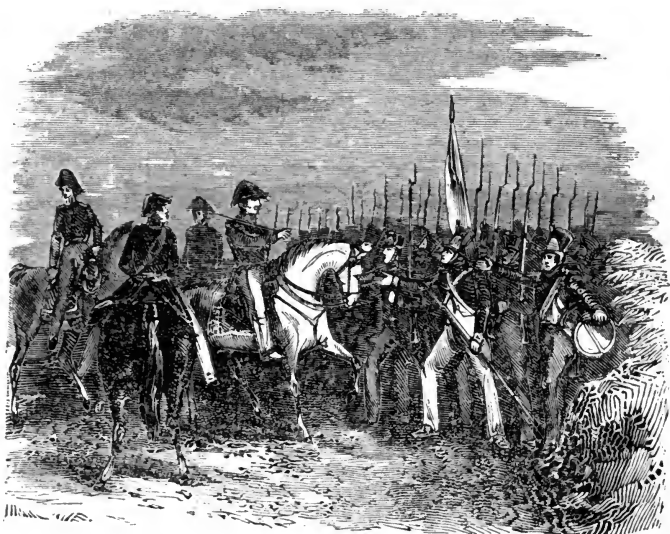
General Scott had been appointed by government to supersede General Taylor in the command of the army of occupation ; and the troops required above, were designed to co-operate with a land and sea force, shortly to attack the city of Vera Cruz, and the Castle of San Juan D'Ulloa.

General Taylor was thus deprived of the services of General Worth,* and of nearly all those troops whom he had led through

* Among those who left General Taylor at this time, was GENERAL WM. J. WORTH, who had acted so brilliant a part at Monterey. He was born in New York, and had early the benefits of a good education. When quite young he was engaged as clerk in a mercantile house in Albany ; but possessing a passion for military operations he entered the army in the commencement of the war with Great Britain, and through the influence of General Scott, he was appointed as first lieutenant of the twenty-third infantry, on the 19th of March, 1813.

so many dangers and privations, and whose veteran brows were surrounded with laurels gathered at Resaca de la Palma, Matamoras, and Monterey. The parting must have been affecting; and the address of the old hero proves that he *felt* it to be:—

“It is with deep sensibility that the commanding general finds himself separated from the troops he so long commanded. To



General Taylor taking leave of the Veterans.

those corps, regular and volunteer, who have shared with him the active services of the field, he feels the attachment due to such associations, while to those who are making their first campaign, he must express his regret that he cannot participate with them in

At the sanguinary battle of Chippewa, Worth was aid to General Scott, and bore his full share in its toils and dangers. He was often in the very hottest of the engagement, and is mentioned with distinction in the official report of General Brown, the commanding officer. His service was rewarded by government, and he received a commission as captain on the 5th of July, 1814, “for his gallant and distinguished conduct on the 5th of July, in the battle of Chippewa.”

The next important affair in which Worth was engaged, was the battle of Niagara. In this he behaved with the same coolness and bravery which had

its eventful scenes. To all, both officers and men, he extends his heart-felt wishes for their continued success and happiness, confi-

distinguished him at Chippewa, and like his friend General Scott, he received so severe a wound as to disable him from participating in the events which followed the battle. He was rewarded by a second brevet, dated on the 25th of July, and promoting him to the rank of major.

At the close of the war, Major Worth was appointed military instructor in the Military Academy at West Point, the difficult duties of which station he performed with judgment and general satisfaction. He was made a brevet lieutenant-colonel 25th July, 1824, major of ordnance in 1832, and on the 7th of July, 1838, colonel of the eighth regiment of infantry.

Like so many brave officers of that time, Colonel Worth was ordered to Florida to participate in the war against the Seminoles. Notwithstanding that this country was one of the most unfavorable for the exercise of high military abilities, Worth soon compelled several parties of the Indians to surrender; and on the 19th of April, 1842, he fought the battle of Palaklakhaha, with a large detachment of Indians, whom he defeated, and subsequently obliged to surrender. This battle closes his active duties in Florida. He had been appointed brevet brigadier-general on the 1st of March, 1842.

When Taylor was ordered to Corpus Christi, General Worth joined the army with him, and when the Americans reached the Rio Grande, he planted with his own hand, the national flag on the river, within one hundred and fifty yards of the Mexican batteries. Some unfortunate circumstance having happened, concerning military etiquette, General Worth deemed it his duty to resign. This he did, however, in terms highly honorable to himself, as a soldier and patriot, assuring the commander, that although he had little fear of open hostilities with Mexico, yet should such occur, he would rejoice to have his resignation withdrawn. His letter concludes as follows:—"If there is any form or manner, in which out of authority, I can serve you, it is hardly necessary to say, with what alacrity I shall be always at your command. At the earliest moment when you feel assured that no conflict is at hand, or in prospective, I shall be much gratified by being allowed to retire, and not before."

General Taylor replied to him in a highly delicate and characteristic manner, and General Worth returned to the United States. Here news of the investment of General Taylor and of the events preceding the battles of the 8th and 9th, disappointed his fond hope of peace, and he determined immediately to rejoin the army. This intention was communicated to Adjutant-General Jones in the following letter, dated May 9th, 6 o'clock, P. M.:

"SIR:—Reliable information which I have this moment received from the head-quarters of the army in front of Matamoras, makes it not only my duty but accords with my inclination to request permission to withdraw my resignation, and that I be *ordered* or permitted forthwith to return to, and take command of, the troops from which I was separated on the 7th of April, by order No. 43, army of occupation, &c. &c. &c."

The request of the General was granted, and he was ordered to proceed immediately to the seat of war. He left Washington on the 11th of May, and arrived at the camp in time to participate in the capture of Matamoras. His subsequent career is given in the text.

It is one great proof of the talents of this able soldier, that instead of hastily

dent that their achievements on another theatre will redound to the credit of their country and its arms."

pushing his troops into danger in order to make up for his late inactivity, he has ever displayed the utmost judgment and regard for their safety. At the brilliant assault on the Bishop's Palace at Monterey, and more latterly at Vera Cruz, he has won for himself the character of an officer, to whom in danger his country may look with confidence.

By the last advices General Worth had, in company with General Scott, advanced to the pass of Rio Frio, *en route* for the city of Mexico. There is little doubt that we shall soon hear that he has again distinguished himself under his old patron.





CHAPTER X.

Battle of Buena Vista.



IN consequence of the withdrawal of his forces by General Scott, General Taylor was obliged to fall back upon Monterey, where he remained until February. In that month he received reinforcements, and immediately determined to march at all hazards, towards Santa Anna's position. Accordingly he left Monterey at the head of five thousand four hundred men, and on the 20th of February, was at

Agua Nueva, eighteen miles below Saltillo. Here he received intelligence that Santa Anna was then but thirty miles distant, and



D. S. Wigg
/ Br. Gen. U.S.A.

rapidly advancing. He, therefore, left Agua Nueva, and took up a strong position at Buena Vista, seven miles below Saltillo.

The excellence of this station, as a battle ground, had been remarked by General Taylor, when passing it on his previous march, and the wisdom evinced in its choice has been a theme of universal admiration. The face of the country is every way adapted to interrupt the progress of an enemy's cavalry, and to diminish the advantages of a superiority in numbers. The mountains rise on either side of an irregular and broken valley, about three miles in width, dotted over with hills and ridges, and scarred with broad and winding ravines. The main road lies along the course of an "arroyo," the bed of which is so deep as to form an almost impassable barrier, while the other side is bounded by precipitous elevations, stretching perpendicularly toward the mountains, and separated by broad gullies until they mingle with one at the principal base. Of course such a road is almost impracticable for artillery, and, in fine, for any satisfactory movements of a large army.

On the morning of the 22d, General Taylor was advised that the enemy were in sight, advancing. They had left Encarnacion at 11 o'clock, on the day previous, and had driven in a mounted force left at Agua Nueva, to cover the removal of public stores. The American order of battle had been previously arranged. Captain Washington's battery (fourth artillery) was posted to command the road, while the first and third Illinois regiments, under Colonels Hardin and Bissell, each eight companies, and the second Kentucky regiment, under Colonel McKee, occupied the crests of the ridges on the left and in the rear. The Arkansas and Kentucky regiments of cavalry, commanded by Colonels Yell and H. Marshall, occupied the extreme left, near the base of the mountain, while the Indiana brigade, under Brigadier-General Lane, the Mississippi riflemen, under Colonel Davis, the squadrons of the first and second dragoons, under Captain Steen and Lieutenant-Colonel May, and the light batteries of Captains Sherman and Bragg, (third artillery,) were held in reserve.

At 11 o'clock, Surgeon-General Lindenbury, of the Mexican army, arrived at the head-quarters of the Americans, bearing a

white flag and a communication from Santa Anna. The latter was a summons to surrender, which we annex, together with the reply.

[TRANSLATION.]

Summons of General Santa Anna to General Taylor.

You are surrounded by twenty thousand men, and cannot, in any human probability, avoid suffering a rout and being cut to pieces by our troops; but as you deserve consideration and particular esteem, I wish to save you from a catastrophe, and for that purpose give you this notice, in order that you may surrender at discretion, under the assurance that you will be treated with the consideration belonging to the Mexican character, to which end you will be granted an hour's time, to make up your mind, to commence from the moment when my flag of truce arrives in your camp.

With this view I assure you of my particular consideration.

God and liberty! Camp at Encantada, February 22d, 1847.

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

To General Z. TAYLOR, Commanding forces of the U. S.

HEAD QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION,
Near Buena Vista, February 22d, 1847.

SIR:—In reply to your note of this date, summoning me to surrender my forces at discretion, I beg leave to say that I decline acceding to your request.

With high respect I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Major-General U. S. A. commanding.

Senor Gen. D. ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA,
Commander-in-chief La Encantada.

Before dark a number of the enemy's infantry had ascended the mountains on the left, from which, at the distance of three hundred yards, they opened a heavy fire upon Colonel Marshall's regiment. This was returned by two of his companies which were dismounted for that purpose, and the skirmishing continued until after dark. In this slight affray three of the Americans were slightly wounded. While it was going on, three pieces of Captain Washington's battery

had been detached to the left, and were supported by the second Indiana regiment. A shell was occasionally thrown by the enemy into this part of the line, but without producing any effect. It was now evident that no serious attack would be made before morning, and accordingly General Taylor returned to Saltillo with the Mississippi cavalry and regiment of dragoons. In order, however, to be prepared for an attack at any moment, the troops were ordered to bivouack without fires, and sleep upon their arms.

A body of cavalry, numbering at least fifteen hundred, had been observed all day hovering in the rear of Saltillo, having entered the valley through a narrow pass east of the city. The intention of this cavalry was unknown, but it had probably been thrown behind the American army to break up and harass its expected retreat, and if practicable, to make an attack upon the town. Ample measures had been taken to thwart the enemy should they attempt the latter project. The city was occupied by three excellent companies of Illinois volunteers, under Major Warren, of the first regiment, and a field-work which commanded most of the approaches was garrisoned by Captain Webster's* company, first artillery, and armed with two twenty-four pound howitzers, while the train and head-quarters camp was guarded by two companies of Mississippi riflemen under Captain Rodgers, and a field-piece commanded by Captain Shover, third artillery. General Taylor himself passed the night in the city, and did not reach the field of battle until the following morning, when the engagement had been for some time commenced.

The morning of the 23d was beautiful, and for a little while it seemed as though nature had divested her sons of the disposition or capability of inflicting injury. The wild ravines of the rocks hung with dense forests, and frowning for the return of day, afforded relief to the little hills and clumps of chapparal which were scattered in every direction; while a confused prospect of deep gorges, tangled foliage, irregular valleys, and in the distance the quiet, solemn mountains, all blended into one indistinct picture by the approaching twilight, lent to the whole an appearance of romance. But as the sun approached the horizon, the morning rendered visible the extended

* Captain Webster is a son of the distinguished American statesman, and a regular graduate of West Point Academy.

lines and white tents of two opposing armies, and soon the blast of the war trumpet, the beating of drums, and the trembling of the ground beneath the tread of armed thousands, announced that the antagonists were preparing for other scenes than an admiration of the beauties of nature. Mexico and her hostile sister were about to meet as they never had before. There had been the opening of the drama at Palo Alto and La Palma, and the battling of fierce experience at Monterey; but they were but the preparations for the grand display which, under the favorite generals of both nations, was now to be exhibited on the plains of Buena Vista.

During the evening and night of the 22d, detachments of the enemy had been observed stealing toward the station where had been the firing of the preceding day. These different parties had united, and taken up a position on the mountain side, with the intention of outflanking the American left wing. They were mostly light troops, and altogether destitute of artillery. While they were manœuvering, the Americans captured a Mexican soldier, who reported the force of Santa Anna to be six thousand cavalry and fifteen thousand infantry, with fifteen pieces of artillery, including some twenty-four pounders. This confirmed the statement of that General himself in his summons to surrender, and fully justified the prevalent belief that the coming battle would be obstinate and bloody.

Early on the morning of the 23d, the action was opened by a fire of the Mexicans upon the American extreme left. During the night they had so stationed a twelve pounder on a point at the base of the mountain, that it could be made to command any position which the Americans might take, and the quick, heavy discharges from this piece, showed that they knew the importance of their advantage, and were determined to improve it.

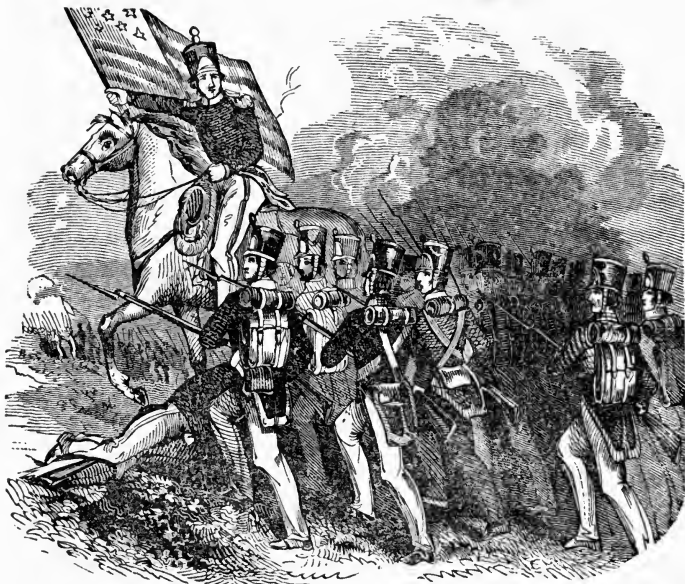
These discharges were received and answered by the riflemen under Colonel Marshall, who had been previously reinforced by three companies under Major Trail, of the second Illinois volunteers. Though engaged with a much superior force, these troops maintained their ground with spirit and effect, returning the fire of the light troops with great coolness.

Meanwhile Lieutenant O'Brien of the fourth artillery, accompanied by Lieutenant Bryan of the topographical engineers, was detached

with three pieces of Washington's battery to counteract the effect of the Mexican field piece. A few well directed shots accomplished the end ; but their firing was after a little while renewed.

The attention of the army was now directed to a movement of the enemy on the left of its line, where for some time they had been concentrating a large force of both infantry and cavalry. As the object of this movement was to crush the left wing, the batteries of Sherman and Bragg were immediately ordered to that station ; Colonel Bissell's regiment occupied a position between them, while Colonel McKee's Kentuckians were transferred from the right, so as to hold a position near the centre. At the same time the second Indiana regiment under Colonel Bowles, was placed on the extreme left, nearly perpendicular to the direction of the line, so as to oppose, by a direct fire, the flank movement of the enemy. The whole of these, with the forces before engaged on the left, were under the command of Brigadier-General Lane.

Meanwhile the whole body of the enemy had formed, and were bearing down toward the American line. As the whole train moved in slow procession, both horses and men clothed in splendid armor, and their swords and polished lances glittering in the morning sun, they presented a spectacle at once noble and impressive. At the same time the Americans were not idle, but watched coolly the approach of the host, with whom they were soon to be engaged in mortal conflict ; and Lane even ordered the artillery and second Indiana regiment forward, in order to bring them within effective range. The artillery of both armies now commenced rapid discharges upon the opposing ranks, while at the same moment the Mexican infantry poured a wide sheet of fire upon the whole line from the left, to McKee's regiment. This was answered by the Kentucky riflemen under McKee, Clay and Fry, and the uninterrupted roar of fire-arms, and shouts of the combatants announced that the action on the left had become general. The American artillery was now within musket range of the Mexican infantry, into which it poured a most destructive fire, but without being able to check their approach. During the whole attack the second Illinois regiment was exposed to the hottest of the fire, which it sustained with admirable firmness ; and the main body of Colonel Hardin's regiment having moved to the



Major Dix rallying the Indiana men.

right of the Kentuckians, the representatives of each state seemed to vie with each other in doing the best service to their country.

Meanwhile the enemy's cavalry had been stealthily pursuing their way along the mountain, and though the artillery had wrought great havoc in their masses, yet the leading columns passed the extreme points of danger, and were concentrating their forces for a charge upon the American rear. At this moment when the utmost effort of every available force seemed essential to the least chance of a successful resistance, the Indiana regiment who were stationed to support the artillery turned upon its proper front, and commenced a disorderly retreat. Colonel Bowles immediately dashed forward to arrest their progress; but all his efforts were vain, and they continued their flight until beyond range of battle. Several officers of General Taylor's staff immediately galloped off to rally them if possible. Major Dix of the pay department (formerly seventh in-

fantry) was the first to reach the deserters ; and seizing the regimental colors, displayed them to the men with an appeal to their honor as soldiers ; he was answered by loud cheers, and a portion of the regiment immediately rallied round him, and was reformed by the officers. The major then led them toward the enemy, bearing the standard until one of the men volunteered to carry it. The party then returned to the field, and though not in time to repair the disaster which their flight had occasioned, yet they afterwards retrieved in some degree their military honor.*

The sight of this disgraceful retreat filled the enemy with exultation. To their imagination, it was but a prelude to the flight of the whole army, and wild shouts of triumph rose above the explosion of artillery and the din of battle. Their troops poured on by thou-

* Some difference of opinion has lately been manifested, with regard to the *causes* of the behaviour of this regiment. A court martial held upon the conduct of Colonel Bowles, is said to have established the fact, that the troops did not retreat until ordered to do so by that officer. He is said to deserve the whole censure of the movement, notwithstanding the commendation he received in the despatches of other officers.

In the official despatch of General Wool, (March 4th,) is the following paragraph—"I shall attempt to make no apology for their retreat ; but I desire to call your attention to one fact connected with this affair. *They remained in their position, in line, receiving the fire of three thousand or four thousand infantry in front, exposed at the same time on the left flank, to a most desperate raking fire from the enemy's battery, posted within point blank shot, until they had deliberately discharged twenty rounds of cartridges at the enemy.*

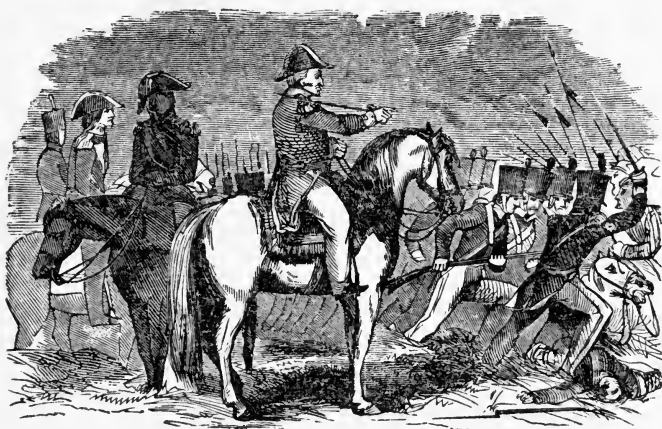
"Some excuse may be framed for those who retired for a few minutes, and then immediately rallied and fought during the day ; but unless they hasten to retrieve their reputations, disgrace must forever hang around the names of those who refused to return ; and I regret to say there were a few of those, from nearly every volunteer corps engaged."

General Taylor thus speaks of this affair in his official of March 6th:—"The second Indiana regiment could not be rallied, and took no further part in the action, except a handful of men, who under its gallant colonel, Bowles, joined the Mississippi regiment, and did good service, and those fugitives who, at a later part of the day assisted in defending the train and depot at Buena Vista."

A correspondent of the New Orleans Delta who was in the battle, has the following item. "Finding that his men faltered early in the action, Colonel Bowles withdrew from them in disgust, and joined the Mississippi regiment in the thickest of the fight." It is also stated that on the following day when the colonel accidentally passed that regiment, they arose and presented arms in testimony of their esteem for his valor.

As further evidence upon this subject, see the general orders of the American commander at the close of this account of the battle.

sands, discharging not only small arms and artillery in front, but cross fires of grape and canister from their battery on the left. Against so tremendous a charge Captain O'Brien found it impossible to retain his position without support, but was not able to withdraw more than two of his pieces, all the horses and cannoneers of the third one being killed or disabled. At the same time Colonel Bissell's regiment, which had been joined by a section of Captain Sherman's battery, having become completely outflanked, and being entirely unsupported, was compelled to fall back. The enemy were now certain of victory, and on every side continued to march dense masses of infantry and cavalry toward a station in rear of the Americans.



General Taylor at Buena Vista

At this moment General Taylor arrived from Saltillo.

The Mississippi regiment had been directed to the left, before reaching the position, and immediately, came into action with the Mexican infantry which had turned the American flank. Previously to this the second Kentucky regiment, and a section of artillery under Captain Bragg, had been ordered from the right to reinforce the left, and arrived in a most seasonable moment. That regiment and a portion of the first Illinois under Colonel Hardin, came rapidly into action, drove back the enemy, and recovered a portion of the lost

ground. The batteries of Sherman and Bragg did much execution, not only in front, but particularly upon the masses which had gained the rear. Washington's battery on the right had also opened its fire, and the artillery now made the columns of the enemy to roll too and fro like ships upon the ocean. The action was at this time terrible. The battle raged along the entire line of both armies, causing the volleys of artillery to reverberate through the mountains like the thunder of their own storms. Twenty-five thousand men were then engaged in a dark and fearful struggle for death or victory.

The Mexican cavalry still pressed on the left, and threatened a charge upon the Mississippi riflemen, who, under Colonel Davis, had been ordered to support the Indiana regiment. The Colonel immediately threw his command into the form of a V, with the opening toward the enemy. In this position he firmly awaited the advance of the cavalry, who came dashing on at full speed. The Americans reserved their fire until they could take aim at the enemy's eyes, and then poured forth a volley from both lines, which broke the opposing ranks, overthrowing horse and rider in promiscuous slaughter.* This retarded but did not stop their progress, and in a little while they rallied for a renewed attack.

* About this time a portion of the enemy's infantry had become detached from the main body and were suffering such terrible slaughter, that General Taylor thought proper to send Lieutenant Crittendon with a flag of truce to the Mexican commander in order to demand their surrender.

The Mexican officer, pretending not to understand the character of his mission, insisted that he should be blindfolded, according to the rules of war, and thus had the lieutenant carried into the camp of Santa Anna himself. This was a ruse to extricate the Mexican cavalry from their dangerous position, and pending this truce, they were all drawn off by a different road from that by which they had gained this position.

Lieutenant Crittenden was conducted blindfolded to the tent of the Mexican general-in-chief, which he found a long distance from the scene of action, and in a situation which he thought the safest place he had been in during the whole day. As he approached Santa Anna's tent, he was greeted with a most tremendous flourish of trumpets, which might have been heard a mile off, but produced no very great terror in the mind of the Kentuckian. His blind was taken off, and he found himself in the presence of the famous Mexican chief, surrounded by a brilliant staff of bedizened, gilded, and moustached officers. Santa Anna apologized to the lieutenant for the act of his officers in having him blindfolded, saying that so far from having any desire to conceal his situation, he was desirous of exhibiting to General Taylor the utter folly of resisting so powerful an army as he had under his command. To which the lieutenant replied, that his simple message was to demand his [Santa Anna's] immediate surrender to General Taylor,

In the meanwhile the third Indiana regiment under Colonel Lane, supported by a considerable body of horse, was ordered to join Colonel Davis. At the same time Lieutenant Kilburn with a piece of Captain Bragg's artillery, was directed to support the infantry there engaged. The action now recommenced with redoubled vigor, and every inch of ground was contested with obstinacy. Several charges were made by the enemy, both with cavalry and infantry, but they were resolutely met, and the Mexicans repulsed with heavy loss. Meanwhile all the regular cavalry and Captain Pike's squadron of Arkansas horse, had been placed under the orders of brevet Lieutenant-Colonel May, with directions to hold in check the enemy's column, which was still advancing to the rear along the base of the mountain; and this he effected in conjunction with the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry, under Colonels Marshall and Yell.

Meanwhile the left, which was still strongly threatened by a superior force, was further strengthened by a detachment of Captain

When this extraordinary demand was translated to the Mexican, he raised his hands and eyebrows in utter astonishment at the temerity and presumption of such a message, and replied, that he would expect General Taylor to surrender in an hour, or he would destroy all his forces. Lieutenant Crittenden's reply, which we have already given—"General Taylor never surrenders!"—terminated the interview, and the battle recommenced, and was continued until night.

In connection with this affair, the following humorous anecdote is related of Colonel May. He was on the very eve of charging the detachment with his dragoons, when Lieutenant Crittenden passed with his white flag. The colonel rode out across the path and inquired the object of the mission. "I am going," replied Crittenden, "to tell those fellows to surrender in order to save their lives." "Wait till I have charged them." "Impossible; the old man has sent me, and I must go on." "But my good fellow," said May, entreatingly, "*for God's sake just rein up for five minutes and give us a chance at them.*" "Would do any thing to oblige you, colonel, but I have the old man's orders, and there is no help for it."

He dashed forward, while the colonel returned to his squadron in the worst of all possible humors against *flags of truce*.—*N. O. Bulletin*.

Colonel May had been manœuvring for an hour and a half to bring these 6000 Mexicans into a ravine where they might have been utterly destroyed. It was his intention to pour in a discharge of grape shot from Bragg's battery, which was under his command, and then having thus thrown them into confusion, to charge them with two regiments of dragoons. They would have been annihilated. As it was, they escaped. General Taylor's motive was undoubtedly pure humanity—a desire to spare the unnecessary effusion of blood. The reader will observe the high compliment paid by the general to the military talents of Colonel May, by supposing that if he should attack this body of Mexicans, their utter destruction, annihilation, was a matter of dead certainty.



Battle of Buena Vista.



Bragg's, and a portion of Captain Sherman's batteries. The concentration of artillery fire upon the masses of the enemy at the base of the mountain, and the determined resistance offered by the two regiments opposed to them, had created confusion in their ranks, and some of the corps attempted to effect a retreat upon their main line of battle. In order to prevent this the squadron of the first dragoons under Lieutenant Rucker was ordered up the deep ravine which they were endeavoring to cross, with orders to charge and disperse them. The lieutenant proceeded to the point indicated; but being exposed to a heavy fire from a battery established to cover the retreat of those corps, he could not accomplish his object.

While this was going on, the American baggage train was observed winding along the Saltillo road. At sight of it the lancers formed, evidently with the design of making an attack upon a part of the army likely to offer but little resistance; but at this important moment Lieutenant Rucker rushed along, giving them a sweeping fire, which scattered a part of them with the loss of many killed and wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel May with two pieces of Sherman's battery, under Lieutenant Reynolds, was also ordered to defend the hacienda of Buena Vista, where the train and baggage of the army were deposited. In the mean time the scattered forces near the hacienda, composed in part of the commands of Majors Trail and German, had partly organized under Major Monroe, chief of artillery, with the assistance of Major Morrison, volunteer staff, and were posted to defend the position. Before the American cavalry had reached the hacienda, that of the enemy had made an attack. The latter were far more numerous than their antagonists; but their fierce charge was successfully resisted by the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry under Colonels Marshall and Yell. In the conflict the Mexican column was divided, one portion sweeping by the depot where it received a destructive fire from the force collected there, and then gained a mountain opposite under a fire from Lieutenant Reynolds's section. The second portion gained the base of the mountain on the left. In the charge at Buena Vista, Colonel Yell and Adjutant Vaughan, of the Kentucky cavalry, were mortally wounded. They were officers of much promise.*

* Colonel YELL was born in Kentucky in 1797, and with his father's family

May's dragoons, with a squadron of Arkansas cavalry under Captain Pike, supported by a piece of artillery under Reynolds, now encountered the lancers, who had once more rallied; but this shock threw their whole rank into confusion, and drove them back toward the mountain with immense loss.

The chances of victory seemed now with the Americans, and the position of that portion of the Mexican army which had gained the rear, was so critical as to render it doubtful; whether it would be able to rejoin the main body. At this moment a Mexican officer reached General Taylor, bearing a white flag, and stated in a most courteous manner that "he had been sent by his excellency General Santa Anna, to his excellency General Taylor, to inquire in the most respectful manner, what he was waiting for."* Although this was believed to be merely a ruse, for the purpose of gaining time, the American commander thought proper to notice it. Accordingly Brigadier-General Wool was despatched to the Mexican com-

early emigrated to Tennessee. In 1813, being then but sixteen years of age, he enlisted at his country's call, and rushed to the side of the immortal Jackson. After assisting in the taking of Pensacola, he accompanied his brigade to New Orleans, and there on the ever memorable eighth, he distinguished himself for bravery and patriotism. In 1818, when volunteers were called for, for the Seminole war, Colonel Yell was among the first to offer his services; he raised a company and was chosen captain, and during the campaign it is said of him, "wherever the danger was greatest, there he was." Between that time and 1827, when he was elected to the legislature of Tennessee, he finished his education, and was admitted to the practice of law. He was loved by General Jackson for his many noble qualities, and received from him many evidences of his confidence.

In '32 he was appointed receiver of public moneys, and removed to Arkansas, but soon after resigned. He was then appointed judge of one of the district courts of Arkansas, and was distinguished for his firmness and impartiality—his quickness to perceive the right and to detect the wrong. When the state constitution was formed he was elected to Congress, and the people were well pleased with his services, continued him there until 1842, when he was chosen governor of the state by a large majority; but in 1844 he resigned, and again became a candidate for Congress. He was signally distinguished in the great canvass of '44, and was triumphantly elected. The present war commenced, however, before his term of office expired, and with the true spirit of the soldier he returned to Arkansas and placed himself at the head of her patriotic volunteers, and there in the hard fought field of Buena Vista he offered up his life to his country. In him the nation, no less than Arkansas, has lost a bright ornament and a faithful and patriotic citizen.

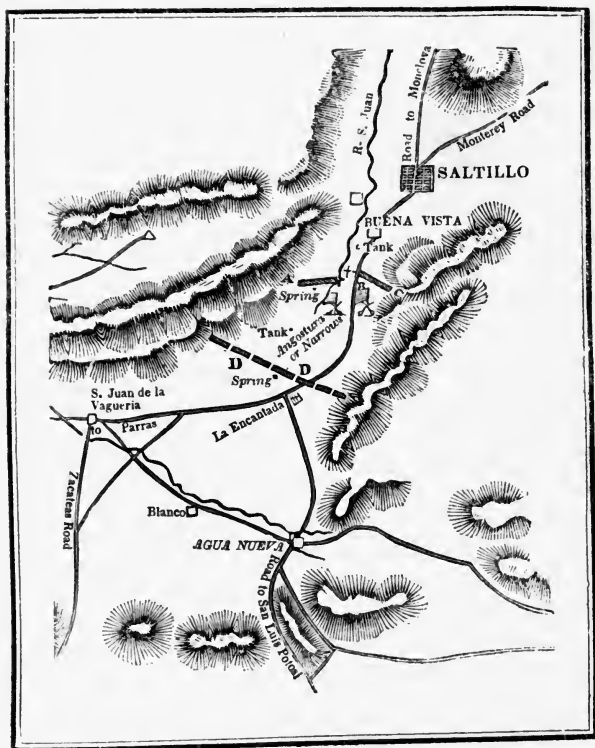
* It is reported that the general replied "that he was only waiting for General Santa Anna to surrender."

DIAGRAM

of the Battle Ground of

BUENA VISTA, OR ANGOSTURA.

Fought on the 22d and 23d of February, 1847.



References.

- A. American Right.
- B. American Battery.
- C. American Left.
- D. Mexican Battery.

mander, and orders issued to the army to cease firing. When Wool arrived at the enemy's line they refused to cease their fire, and he was obliged to return without an interview. During the cessation on the part of the Americans, the enemy continued to retreat along the base of the mountain, and finally effected a junction with the remainder of the army. This had evidently been the object of the Mexican general in asking a truce—a manœuvre as artful as it was successful.

During the day, the cavalry of General Minon had ascended the elevated plain above Saltillo, and occupied the road from the city to the field of battle, where they intercepted several American privates. On approaching the town, they were fired upon by Captain Webster from the redoubt occupied by his company, and then moved toward the eastern side of the valley, in the oblique direction of Buena Vista.

At this time Captain Shover, supported by a miscellaneous command of mounted volunteers, fired several shots at the cavalry with great effect. They were driven into the ravines which lead to the lower valley, closely pursued by Captain Shover, who was further supported by one piece of Captain Webster's battery, under Lieutenant Donaldson, who had advanced from the redoubt, aided by Captain Wheeler's company of Illinois volunteers. The enemy made one or two efforts to charge the artillery, but were finally driven back in a confused mass, and did not reappear upon the plain.

After the junction of the cavalry of Santa Anna with his main army, he determined to concentrate his forces for a general charge upon the American line. They came down in full strength, directing their whole efforts to the point where was the little company of artillery. Captain O'Brien with two pieces, met this heavy charge with the most admirable firmness; but his infantry support being entirely routed, he was at length obliged to leave his guns on the field and retire.* Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the

* The following extracts from the despatches of these two brave artillerymen, will convey an idea of the obstinacy of the conflict which they so nobly maintained.

"The position of things now appeared very critical. If the enemy succeeded in forcing our position at this point, the day was theirs. There was but one other piece opposed to them, and it was all important to maintain our ground until our artillery came round the ravine, from the plain on our left, and joined us. I therefore determined to hold my post until the enemy reached the

left, was immediately ordered into battery ; and without any infantry to support him, and at the imminent risk of losing his guns, that brave officer rushed into action when the Mexican line was but a few yards from the muzzle of his guns. The moment was critical. Every eye was bent toward him, as the fierce lancers, rising in their stirrups, rushed at his little band. Suddenly that artillery which had so often scattered death amid their ranks, opened its tremendous fire. Then there was a pause in their progress, and scores of the dead and wounded sunk with one thrilling groan beneath the hoofs of their companions' chargers. The pause was but for a moment ; a command was given to advance, and they obeyed. But another discharge, and the next moment another, mowed them down by hundreds and threw their columns into disorder and defeat. The Mexicans were thoroughly routed ; and while their regiments and divisions were flying, nearly all the light troops were ordered forward, and followed them with a deadly fire, mingled with shouts which rose above the noise of battle. In this charge the first Illinois regiment, and McKee's Kentuckians were foremost. Forgetting their deficiency of numbers in the ardour of pursuit, these troops pushed forward to

muzzles of my guns. The firing from the section became more and more destructive as the enemy advanced. It repelled a body of lancers, which was about charging on the Illinois regiment. My own loss was severe. I had had two horses shot under me ; the one I was then on, was wounded and limping, and I had received a wound in the leg. All my cannoneers except a few recruits who had joined some days before, were killed or disabled. In the midst of this heavy fire, with horses and men dropping around them, the few recruits who were fit for duty lost their presence of mind, and I found it impossible with all my efforts to keep them to their guns. I remained with the pieces to the last, until the enemy came within a few yards of them, when I was forced to retire for want of a single cannoneer to load or fire. I was however delighted to find that I had maintained my ground sufficiently long, to cause the victory to be secured ; for at this moment, the rest of our artillery arrived and came into action."—*Captain O'Brien's Report.*

"Having gained a point from which my guns could be used, I put them in battery, and loaded with canister. Now for the first time I felt the imminent peril in which we stood. Our infantry was routed, our advanced artillery captured, and the enemy in heavy force coming upon us at a run. Feeling that the day depended upon the successful stand of our artillery, I appealed to the commanding general who was near, for support. None was to be had ; and under his instructions to maintain our position at every hazard, I returned to my battery, encouraged my men, and, when the enemy arrived within good range, poured forth the canister as rapidly as my guns could be loaded. At the first discharge, I observed the enemy falter, and in a short time, he was in full retreat."—*Captain Bragg's Report.*

a considerable distance beyond the battle line ; when the Mexicans wheeled around with almost magical quickness, and attacked them. For awhile the carnage was great on both sides ; but the Americans being but a handful in comparison with the dense masses that were hurled against them, were obliged to retreat. Thus the day again seemed lost ; but in this extremity, an appeal to the faithful weapon, which had never yet failed them, retrieved the victory. While the Americans were driven through the ravines, at the extremities of which a body of Mexican lancers was stationed to cut off their retreat, Brent and Whiting of Washington's battery, discharged upon the pursuers a torrent of grape shot, which overthrew vast numbers, and put the survivors to flight. This fire was most fortunate ; saving the weary remnant of those brave regiments, which had so long and ably sustained the hottest part of the fight. On the other flank the artillery was left unsupported, and while the legions of the enemy came rushing down, its capture seemed inevitable. But Bragg and Thomas, assisted by Bryan, O'Brien and Sherman, seemed to grow with the danger, and eclipsed even the fame they had won at Monterey. Every horse of O'Brien's battery was killed, and the enemy had advanced to within range of grape, sweeping all before them. But here their progress was arrested by a storm of iron hail, by which all their squadrons and battalions were broken and scattered. Though suffering immense loss, they succeeded however in capturing three pieces of artillery which were without horses. This was the third occasion during the day, in which when all seemed lost but honor, the artillery by the ability with which, it was manœuvred, rolled back the tide of success from the enemy, and saved the army. But it was attended with a heavy loss to the Americans. While fighting most gallantly at the head of their respective commands, Colonel Hardin of the first Illinois regiment, and Colonel McKee and Lieutenant-Colonel Clay of the second Kentucky, were each mortally wounded.

The battle had now raged with variable success for nearly ten hours, and after the last carnage, both parties seemed willing to pause upon the result. The approach of night gave the American general an opportunity to pay proper attention to the wounded, as also to refresh his soldiers, who were exhausted by excessive combat and

watchfulness. Though the night was severely cold, most of the troops were compelled to bivouack without fires, expecting that morning would renew the conflict. During the night the wounded were removed to Saltillo, and every preparation made to receive the enemy. Seven fresh companies were drawn from the town, and Brigadier-General Marshall with a reinforcement of Kentucky cavalry, and four heavy guns, under Captain Prentiss, first artillery, was near at hand, when it was discovered that the enemy had abandoned their position during the night. Scouts were sent after them, who soon ascertained that they had fallen back upon Agua Nueva. The great disparity of numbers, and the exhaustion of the troops, rendered it inexpedient and hazardous in the American commander to attempt a pursuit. A staff-officer was despatched to Santa Anna, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, which was satisfactorily completed the next day. The dead were collected and buried; and the Mexican wounded, of which a large number had been left upon the field, were removed to Saltillo, and rendered as comfortable as circumstances would permit.

The force engaged in this battle, together with other items, we give in General Taylor's own words.*

"The American force engaged in the action of Buena Vista, is shown by the accompanying field report, to have been 334 officers, and 4,125 men, exclusive of the small command left in and near Saltillo. Of this number, two squadrons of cavalry and three batteries of light artillery, making not more than 453 men, composed the only force of regular troops. The strength of the Mexican army is stated by General Santa Anna in his summons to be 20,000; and that estimate is confirmed by all the information since obtained. Our loss is 267 killed, 456 wounded, and 23 missing. Of the numerous wounded, many did not require removal to the hospital, and it is hoped that a comparatively small number will be permanently disabled. The Mexican loss in killed and wounded, may be fairly estimated at 1500, and will probably reach 2000. At least 500 of their killed were left upon the field of battle. We have no means of ascertaining the number of deserters and dispersed men from their ranks, but it is known to be very great.

* Official report of Buena Vista, March 6th, 1847.

Our loss has been especially severe in officers, twenty-eight having been killed upon the field. We have to lament the death of Captain George Lincoln, assistant adjutant-general, serving in the staff of General Wool—a young officer of high bearing and approved gallantry, who fell early in the action. No loss falls more heavily upon the army in the field, than that of Colonels Hardin, and McKee, and Lieutenant-Colonel Clay.* Possessing in a remarkable degree the confidence of their commands, and the last two, having enjoyed the advantage of a military education, I had looked particularly to them for support, in case we met the enemy. I need not say that their zeal in engaging the enemy, and the cool and steadfast courage with which they maintained their positions during the day, fully realized my hopes, and caused me to feel yet more sensibly their untimely loss.

I perform a grateful duty in bringing to the notice of the government, the general good conduct of the troops. Exposed for successive nights without fires, to the severity of the weather, they were ever prompt and cheerful in the discharge of every duty, and finally displayed conspicuous steadiness and gallantry, in repulsing at great odds a disciplined foe. While the brilliant success achieved by their arms, releases me from the painful necessity of specifying many cases of bad conduct before the enemy; I feel an increased obligation to mention particular corps and officers, whose skill, coolness and gallantry, and under a continued and heavy fire, seem to merit particular notice.

To Brigadier-General Wool, my obligations are especially due. The high state of discipline and instruction of several of the volunteer regiments, was attained under his command, and to his vigilance and arduous service before the action, and his gallantry and activity on the field, a large share of our success may justly be attributed. During most of the engagement, he was in immediate command of the troops thrown back on our left flank. I beg leave to recommend him to the favourable notice of government.*

* JOHN E. WOOL was born in Orange county, New York, but when a child he lost his father, and removed to Rensselaer county, the residence of his grandfather. While still young, he was placed in a store in the city of Troy, where he conducted himself with so much energy and faithfulness, as afterwards to become a partner in the business. For several years he pursued the occupation



Interview of General Taylor and General Wool.

of a merchant with great success ; but a fire occurring at the end of that time, he was again reduced to penury. The war of 1812 was now on the eve of commencing, and young Wool determined to enter the army. He was commissioned as captain of the 13th U. S. Infantry, on the 14th of April 1812, and the same year, so far distinguished himself at Queenstown Heights, that in 1813 he was promoted to the rank of major in the 29th infantry regiment.

In the stirring events attending the siege of Plattsburg, in 1814, he was intrusted with a separate command, and won the admiration of his superiors, and the high recommendation of General Macomb, the commanding officer. For his services in this affair, government promoted him to the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel, dating from the 11th of September 1814. After the close of the war, he was intrusted with various military duties. Government was not unmindful of his merit, and on the 27th of April 1816, he was created inspector-general, with the rank of colonel ; on April 29th, 1826, brevet brigadier-general, and on June 29th, 1841, full brigadier-general.

In Mexico, General Wool was intrusted with a part of the army, called the *Central Division*, which he led by a most fatiguing route, and joined General Taylor after the storming of Monterey. His services in the battle of Buena Vista have been given ; he led the main army in person, and no man was more instrumental in gaining the victory of that action. Connected with the battle, a pleasing anecdote is related of the two generals. After the last charge of the Mexicans, Wool enthusiastically embraced the old general, and in

Brigadier-General Lane (slightly wounded) was active and zealous throughout the day, and displayed great coolness and gallantry before the enemy.

The services of the light artillery, always conspicuous, were more than usually distinguished. Moving rapidly over the roughest ground, it was always in action at the right place, and the right time, and its well directed fire dealt destruction in the masses of the enemy.*

The Mississippi riflemen under Colonel Davis, were highly conspicuous for their gallantry and steadiness, and sustained throughout the engagement the reputation of veteran troops. Brought into action against an immensely superior force, they maintained themselves for a long time unsupported, and with heavy loss, and held an important part of the field until reinforced. Colonel Davis though severely wounded, remained in the saddle until the close of the action. His distinguished coolness and gallantry at the head of his regiment on this day, entitle him to the particular notice of the government. The third Indiana regiment under Colonel Lane, and a fragment of the second under Colonel Bowles, were associated with the Mississippi regiment, during the greater portion of the day, and acquitted themselves creditably in repulsing the attempts of the enemy, to break that portion of our line. The Kentucky cavalry under Colonel Marshall, rendered good service dismounted, acting as light troops on our left, and afterward with a portion of the Arkansas regiment, in meeting and dispersing the column of cavalry at Buena Vista. The first and second Illinois, and the second Kentucky regiments, served immediately under my eye, and I bear a willing testimony to their excellent conduct throughout the day. The spirit and gallantry, with which the first Illinois and second Kentucky engaged the enemy in the morning, restored confidence to that part of the field, while the list of casualties will show how much these three regiments suffered, in sustaining the heavy charge of the enemy in the afternoon. Captain Conner's company of Texan volunteers, attached to the proud overflowings of triumph, congratulated him upon the victory. "*Ah General,*" replied Rough and Ready, "*it's impossible to whip us when we all pull together.*"

* Here follows a list of the names of artillery officers who were conspicuous in the battle, but as we have given most of them in the detailed account, they are omitted.



Death of Colonel Clay.

second Illinois regiment, fought bravely, its captain being wounded, and two subalterns killed. Colonel Bissell, the only surviving colonel of these regiments, merits notice for his coolness and bravery on this occasion."

The General also speaks in high terms of the medical officers, and the members of General Wool's staff and of his own.

The death of the many distinguished officers who fell in this battle, is thus described by one who shared their trials and dangers :

"Our officers were always in the advance leading their troops ; hence the great mortality among them. One of our small regiments of four hundred men, would be attacked by a whole Mexican brigade of several thousand. Thus the Kentucky infantry was attacked at the foot of a hill, in a deep ravine, by an immense force of the enemy.

A large number of officers was killed here ; among them was Colonel McKee, who fell badly wounded, and was immediately

despatched by the enemy, who pierced him with their bayonets, as he lay on the ground. Lieutenant-Colonel Clay was shot through the thigh, and being unable to walk, was taken up and carried some distance, by some of his men, but owing to the steepness of the hill, the men finding it very difficult to carry him, and the enemy in great numbers pressing upon them, the gallant lieutenant-colonel begged them to leave him and take care of themselves. Forced to leave him on the field, the last that was seen of this noble young officer, he was lying on his back, fighting with his sword, the enemy, who were stabbing him with their bayonets.* The veteran, Captain William S. Willis, of the same regiment, at the head of his company, with three stalwart sons, who fought at his side, was badly wounded, but still continued the fight, until he was overcome with the loss of blood.

In the mean time the Indiana brigade displaying some hesitation, Assistant Adjutant-General Lincoln rushed to their front, and whilst upbraiding them for their cowardice, was shot, several balls passing through his body.

The intrepid Colonel Hardin, like Colonels McKee and Clay, was killed by the enemy—not, however, before he had killed one of them with a pistol, which he fired whilst lying on the ground.

Colonel Yell led a charge of his mounted volunteers, against a

* Lieutenant-Colonel HENRY CLAY was the second, and not the eldest son of the Hon. Henry Clay, as the papers represent. Mr. Clay's eldest son is Thomas H. Clay, Esq., who resides on a farm near Lexington, Kentucky. Lieutenant-Colonel Clay was a graduate of West Point, where he took the first honors. He afterwards left the army, travelled in Europe, married, settled on a farm, and was several times elected to the Kentucky legislature, in which he always occupied an honorable station. Some years ago he lost his beautiful and accomplished wife, which caused great grief to her distinguished father-in-law, who was at that time a senator in congress. When he was appointed lieutenant-colonel of the Kentucky rifles, he was engaged in the practice of the law in Louisville. He was a gentleman of fine intellect, accomplished manners, chivalrous character, and entirely worthy of his noble sire.

Lieutenant EDWARD M. VAUGHAN, adjutant of the Kentucky cavalry, who fell at Buena Vista, was a native of Fayette county, in that state, and, as he once informed us, the son of the first female born in the state. He was a talented member of the legal profession, and was engaged in practice at Lexington at the time he was elected adjutant of the Kentucky cavalry. He was a man of noble character, elevated principles, daring courage, and blameless life.



Battle of Buena Vista.

large body of lancers, and was killed by a lance, which entered his mouth and tore off one side of his face.”*

These instances of the gallantry of our officers, in sacrificing their lives, are but a very small part of the whole. As a general rule they were foremost in the charge; and in many instances officers were killed thirty and even sixty yards in advance of their respective columns. With such commanders to lead them, it is not surprising that the men should have exhibited a degree of firmness hardly ever evinced before by militia in their first battle. If we recur to the history of the American revolution and the war of 1812, we shall find that militia men almost invariably recoiled at the first fire, and frequently battles were lost by their want of firmness; but in this battle the volunteers faltered in only a few instances, and that in the presence of an overwhelming force of the enemy, and

* The New Orleans Delta, of March 24th, makes the following remarks on this subject:

The list of killed and wounded on the American side, in the bloody fight at Buena Vista, is a mournful proof of the ferocity and violence which characterized this severe conflict, and a sad testimonial of the chivalry and fearlessness of American soldiery. Sixty-five commissioned officers killed and wounded in so small an army, exhibits a proportion and result unparalleled in the history of war. Estimating General Taylor's force at five thousand rank and file, and allowing one commissioned officer to twenty men, the startling conclusion is arrived at, that our loss in this sanguinary engagement, of commissioned officers, amounted to one-fourth of the whole number in the field. If the loss of the rank and file were in like proportion to that of officers, it would exceed twelve hundred. In view of such terrible results as these, Santa Anna approached as near the truth, melancholy as it is, as he ever did, when he said that both armies were cut up. *The loss of the Mexicans can scarcely be exaggerated when it is put down at four thousand.* Santa Anna must have had with him at least seventeen thousand men. When we last heard from him previous to the battle, he was at San Fernando, waiting for all the various detachments of his army to assemble preparatory to his attack. This was on the 17th, and the attack was fixed for the 21st. Now, as Santa Anna knew exactly Taylor's situation and force, he would certainly not attack him until he had collected all his available troops, and these we know, allowing for desertion and for a *corps de reserve*, could not have fallen short of seventeen thousand, as he left San Luis with twenty-three thousand. If, then, with such a force as this, after a two days' hard fight, and after inflicting upon General Taylor so heavy a loss, he is compelled to withdraw twenty miles to the rear, the conclusion is inevitable that he has sustained a prodigious loss, and is irretrievably beaten. The army of General Taylor may be considered as reduced at least one-third by casualties and by details to take care of the wounded. This would leave but about three thousand men to hold his position, and we know he did hold it for several days after the action undisturbed by the enemy.

after sustaining many volleys of musketry and grape shot. This result is due to the previous faithful discipline of General Wool and the other veterans who had been for some months engaged in preparing the volunteers for service on the battle field. The severe discipline of General Wool was extremely unpalatable to the volunteers before this battle took place ; but after the battle they were sensible that it was to this alone they owed their success ; and they formally thanked him for the discipline of which they had previously complained.





LIEUTENANT COLONEL C. A. MAY.

From a Daguerreotype by Van Loan.



Mexicans Wounded at Buena Vista.

CHAPTER XI.

Battle of Buena Vista, continued.



THE following is Santa Anna's detailed report of the battle of Buena Vista :

LIBERATING ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.
Gen. in Chief, Campaign, Secretary's Office.

MOST EXCELLENT SIR :—In my despatch from the battle field of Angostura, dated the 23d, I promised to give you details of the action of the 22d, and the battle of the 23d, so soon as I should effect the movement which our entire lack of water and of all supplies made indispensable. In those engagements the army and the nation have

restored the lustre of their arms, by overcoming obstacles inconceivable to all, save those who witnessed them. These arose not only from the difficulties of this contest and of our own situation, but also from the rigour of the season, and the exhaustion of the country, along an almost desert route of over fifty leagues, that was destitute of good water, and of all save the most limited supplies.

The supreme government was informed by communications made before my leaving San Luis, that the army under my command would not commence its operations till the end of winter, as I knew by experience the severe climate of the region, which was also scant of habitations, provisions, shelter, and even of fuel. I, therefore, resolved to go on organizing, drilling, arming, and clothing the army; and in a word, to put into a military shape the forces which had just been assembled. My intentions, however, could not be maturely realized.

The want of pecuniary resources embarrassed all my dispositions. The soldiers, though well disposed to combat with the enemy, had been badly supplied for a month, and would soon have been in want even of food, but that the exertions of the commanders of corps prevented that destitution from driving them to their ranks. While those meritorious men were suffering all kinds of privation, certain writers from ignorance, want of reflection, party spirit, or, perhaps, from mistaken patriotism, were zealously engaged in thwarting the plans which might otherwise have proved successful. This they did by unjust charges against the army, and particular individuals whom they abused for not marching to the conflict, accusing them of want of decision, and asserting that the position of the army at San Luis was more threatening to our liberties than to the enemy. In the clubs of that capital they labored with assiduity to make the army the instrument of a revolt; but I frustrated their intrigues by timely steps. There was one writer who had the audacity to intimate that I was in collusion with the enemy. Yes, I, to whom they may attribute errors, but whose whole previous course has shown the most elevated patriotism! Traitors are they who seek not only to traduce me, but by their detraction of the army, to unnerve its vigour for the service of the country. It seems as if a fatality, directs

the destinies of this nation, and interdicts a unanimity of the public will for its defence ; and from this fatal blindness, the moment when every heart and every aspiration should be directed to one object, is the very juncture when division and distrust are disseminated. Behold me then, compelled by every circumstance to change my plans. Desertion had already commenced to a shameful extent ; and I was fully persuaded that if the scarcity should continue, the army would be dishonorably frittered away. I, therefore, resolved that if annihilated, it should be with glory. Having no supplies, I, to obtain them, compromised my private fortune, and the credit of myself and friends. All this procured me the sum of one hundred and eighty thousand dollars, with which I was able to furnish the needful supplies to the army, for twelve days. I knew well the country we had to cross and the necessity there would be for carrying provisions : and I sympathized in anticipation with the soldier, for what he would endure from the rigour of the season ; but to render good service to the country and save its honor, I had to overlook all this.

The army moved from San Luis by brigades, so as to render available the scanty resources afforded by the country we were to cross. The force consisted of 13,432 infantry, divided into twenty-eight battalions ; 4,338 cavalry, in thirty-nine squadrons, and a train of artillery of three twenty-four pounders, three sixteen pounders, five twelve pounders, five eight pounders, and a seven inch howitzer ; all served by four hundred and thirteen artillery men ; the total being 18,133 men. Of this force there remained behind the garrison of the works at San Luis, and others which I allotted to the towns on the route ; as also two squadrons to escort our small and only reserve of ammunition ; a brigade of infantry of two battalions, under General Ciriaco Vasquez, which remained as a corps of reserve, in Matchuala, and of observation upon Tula ; as also a brigade of cavalry, under General Don Jose Urrea. The latter was intended to pass Tula and move through Tamaulipas to the neighborhood of Monterey, so as to call the enemy's attention to that quarter. The point of concentration for the brigades ought necessarily to be near this place, so that in the region through which they had to move, many troops might not be at once thrown

together. I therefore fixed on the hacienda of Encarnacion, for that point, it being, as I calculated, the last stage but one of my march. I there held a review of the army, which had already lost a thousand men, by sickness and desertion. The former was caused by the scantiness and bad quality of food, and still more of water, which was brackish as well as scarce, as also by snow storms and the exposure of the troops who had always been in bivouac and without fuel. These snow storms obliged me to suspend the march two days, till the weather became more settled; for the cold had already caused the death of several men and horses, and I felt bound by every means to diminish the losses we were incurring. These hardships will account for the number of desertions which occurred up to our arrival at Encarnacion, and which afterwards even increased. It must also be remembered that almost the whole army had been recently formed, and as is well known, of men taken by violence from their homes.

We had advices that the enemy were fortified in the hacienda of Agua Nueva, with six thousand men and thirty pieces, resolved to defend the defiles known by the names of the passes of Carnero and Agua Nueva. The Americans did not know the precise point to which our march was directed, for though they exchanged some shots with our advance in Encarnacion, and had frequent small skirmishes with us in the above passes, they supposed our troops to be scouting parties of the first brigade of cavalry, under Don Jose V. Minon, whom I had advanced as far as the hacienda of Potosi. These were the impressions when I made my dispositions.

It was my intention to place my forces between the enemy and Saltillo, so as to oblige him to fight under the disadvantage of having his communication cut off, or, if he would not leave his works, to enable me to besiege him in Agua Nueva. This plan might be carried out in three different ways. One was by marching twenty leagues by the direct road, another by moving to the right by La Hedionda, so as to occupy Buena Vista; and the third by moving to the left by La Punta de Santa Elena, so as to occupy the hacienda of La Banqueria, and thereafter the road to Saltillo. The two last movements were at this time impracticable, for they would

either of them require three or four days' march, while we were without provisions, forage, or water. I, therefore, resolved to operate by the direct road, force the positions, and after passing the last defile, make a diversion by the left and occupy the rancho of Encantada, with the view of obtaining water, none of which was to be had for more than eighteen leagues. All this was favored by the enemy's ignorance of our march; but misfortune still followed us. A deserter from the regiment of Coraceros, a native of Saltillo, named Francisco Valdes, passed over from Encarnacion to the enemy, and gave him information of the movement. The execrable treason of this infamous wretch, frustrated the best combinations.

On, the 21st, at noon, I ordered the march to commence, the four light battalions, under General Don Pedro Ampudia, forming the vanguard. I had not hesitated to allow that general and other officers who had been court martialed for the affair of Monterey, to participate in these operations, not only because I did not consider them culpable, but also on account of the zeal they manifested. This brigade was followed by one of artillery, of sixteen pounders, with regiments of engineers and their train, and those by the park of the regiment of hussars. Then came the first division commanded by General Don Manuel Lombardini, with four twelve pounders, and the park. The second division, under General Don Francisco Pacheco, followed next with four eight pounders and their park. After these the whole of the cavalry, under Don Julian Juvera; and then the remainder of the general park and baggage, the rear being covered by a brigade of cavalry, under General Don Manuel Audrade.

In this order of march the troops were ordered to make the first fourteen leagues, between Encenada and a plain called De la Guerra, which is in front of the first defile, called the pass of the Pinones; and to pass the night on that plain in the same order of column. The troops having eaten their rations, order was given for carrying water, as none could be met with till the day following, after having overcome the enemy at Agua Nueva, three leagues beyond the aforesaid pass. I, with my staff and a regiment of engineers, occupied the front, a little behind the light troops. On arriving on the plain De la Guerra, I continued the march in order to pass the

defile of Pinones, which was accomplished, and I ordered the light brigade to take a position in the pass of Carnero, where it had a skirmish with an advance of the enemy. Under these dispositions we passed the night.

At dawn on the 22d, the army continued its march, with the idea of carrying by force of arms the pass of Agua Nueva, which I supposed would be defended by the enemy ; but I found to my surprise that it was abandoned. I then concluded that the American forces, had retired to their fortifications in the hacienda, to concentrate their defence under cover of the intrenchments, which I had heard they had there thrown up. Under this idea I continued the march in order to turn by the right to the rancho of Encantada, which, as I have before mentioned, is on the Saltillo road, being between that city and Agua Nueva, and four or five leagues from each. Till that time no one had appeared to give me information, nor did any one after, except a servant from Agua Nueva, who told me that the enemy had been evacuating his position since the day previous, and falling back towards Saltillo ; and that on that same morning, the hacienda had been wholly abandoned by the retreat of a small detachment which escorted a large quantity of munitions. By this movement my first plans and dispositions, founded on an expected resistance, were rendered abortive ; but I still did not despair of a successful result, for I had in anticipation, directed General Minon with his cavalry brigade 1200 strong, to occupy on the morning of the 22d, the hacienda of Buena Vista, distant three short leagues from Saltillo. This force might arrest the enemy's march, or, at least, make a diversion that would give time for the army to come up. I therefore continued my march without losing more time than would allow the soldiers to drink water on the road. The light brigade came within sight of the enemy's rear guard, and I ordered them to charge in conjunction with the hussar regiment. I had reason to believe the enemy were making a precipitate retreat, as they left several articles on the road, such as carts, forge implements, extra wheels and other things which we gathered while marching. In consequence of the different reports I received, I ordered the cavalry to advance ; I thought we would be able to reach their rear guard, and placed myself at the head of those troops.

On arriving at a place called Angostura, I found the main body of the enemy awaiting me in position. The road from the pass of Pinones to Saltillo runs between two chains of mountains, which form that pass and those of Carnero and Agua Nueva. The ridges open beyond that hacienda, and approach each other again at Angostura, where the road turns to the right. At this place there is a succession of ridges, which run out toward the line of our route, and at right angles with it, and between them are ravines which form the drains of the mountains on the right. They are all more or less passable, but all very difficult. The enemy's position was in front and in rear of the road, his right and front being covered by ravines that were impassable, even for infantry, and a battery of four pieces being planted on the highest point. His battalions were formed on the heights, with two other batteries, one of which was in a low part of the road between two hills; and, to my view, their forces appeared to be about 8000 men, with twenty pieces; but the prisoners taken from them report twenty-six pieces, and upwards of 8000 combatants.

I reconnoitred the position and situation of the enemy, and ordered the director of engineers, General Don Ignacio de Mora y Villamil, to do the same. After ascertaining the force of the invader, it was necessary either to await the infantry to take position, or to fight, as might seem most advisable. At this interval I observed that the enemy had neglected to occupy a height on his left flank; and without losing a moment I ordered General Ampudia's light brigade to take possession of, and hold it at every cost. As the brigade came up, I found them in two lines on a rising ground, that fronted the enemy, there being another eminence between our two positions. The first division of infantry was under the command of General Lombardini, and the second under the command of General Pacheco. I directed that General Mora y Villamil, in conjunction with the commanding general of artillery, Don Antonio Corona, should find a position for a battery of sixteen pounders, to be sustained by the regiment of engineers. Two other batteries of twelve and eight pounders were located by me. The cavalry commanded by General Juvera, were placed on the right of our rear, and on our left flank. The regiment of hussars was also posted in the rear, and on the flank aforesaid was a height, which I ordered the

battalion of Leon to occupy. The general park was in the rear, covered by the brigade of General Andrade, and between this park and the lines of battle, I took my own position.

The making of these dispositions, as may be supposed, occupied some time, for the troops arrived at their positions after a march of more than twenty leagues. It was therefore not an hour for combat, and the army lay on its arms. The enemy, however, as soon as he perceived that we had occupied the height that flanked his left and our right, despatched two battalions to dislodge us, which led to a warm engagement, that lasted all the afternoon and till after dark, when he was repulsed with the loss of 400 men, according to the report of the prisoners. Ours was much less, as we had the advantages, of the ground.

At dawn, on the 23d, I mounted my horse; the enemy had not changed his previous dispositions, and was ready to receive us. I observed but one difference, which was that on his right, and at some distance from his position, he had formed two bodies of infantry, with a battery of four pieces, as if with the intent of threatening our left flank; but I at once believed this to be a mere demonstration, for he would never have left in his rear the difficult ground which gave strength to that position, being the web of impassable ravines, before referred to. I therefore gave no attention to this disposition of his forces, and resolved to move mine by the right. With this intention I advanced the divisions of General Lombardini and General Pacheco, in that direction. I ordered General Don Manuel Micheltoreno to plant the battery of eight pounders on our right flank, so as to rake obliquely the enemy's line, and to remain with the staff of which he was chief, and await my orders. I directed that General Ampudia, with the light brigade, should charge by our left flank, on the enemy's right, and that General Mora y Villamil should form a column of attack, composed of the regiment of engineers, the twelfth battalion, the *fijo de Mexico*, and the companies of Puebla and Tampico, commanded by Colonel Don Santiago Blanco. At the same time I directed General Corona, commanding the artillery, to place the battery of twelve pounders in a more commanding position, while the third division

remained in reserve, under Brevet General Don Jose Maria Ortega.

As soon as the enemy perceived our movements he commenced the action at all points, attacked our troops with intrepidity, and maintained the conflict with great vigor. Our men received them with proper energy, driving back and following up the assailants. At this time my horse was disabled by a grape shot, and it was some time before I could mount another. As the enemy had yielded ground, I ordered the cavalry to advance, and charge, which was done with vigor. Suitable orders had been sent to the generals of division and brigade, among the rest to General Don Angel Guzman; but though the officers and troops acted with great resolution, it was impossible to overcome the difficulties of the ground; and after a struggle which did them honor, they were obliged to fall back to their positions. After various alternations the same occurred with the infantry.

The battle, which commenced at seven in the morning, was prolonged for many hours, our loss every moment accumulating. Many officers and soldiers had been killed, and a number of commanders and distinguished officers wounded; among whom were General Lombardini, Lieutenant-Colonels Brito, Galloso, and others. Among the slain were Lieutenant-Colonels Asonos, Berra, and other meritorious officers, whose loss the country will ever lament. The enemy maintained his ground with the utmost obstinacy, inasmuch that some of our troops faltered in their attacks, and many of the raw recruits dispersed. This, however, ought to exalt the merit of those whose intrepidity was never paralyzed, and may also be cited to show how hotly contested was the action.

Things were in this situation when I concluded to make the final effort. With this view I ordered that a battery of twenty-four pounders should be mounted; that the column of attack then posted on our left flank, where it had no object of operation, should be transferred to our right, and there be joined by the remains of the tenth regiment, the battalion of Leon, and the reserves, all under the command of Brevet General Don Francisco Perez. I executed this in person, and afterwards sent for General Mora y Villamil, and made him acquainted with my final dispositions. I

had already directed Generals Perez and Pecheco, each with his command, to be prepared for an extreme struggle, and had ordered the battery of eight pounders to advance and take the enemy's line in flank. The charge was made with daring valor, and was resisted with animated vigor, with a fire so heavy and rapid as to cause admiration. But the Americans could not sustain themselves, they were driven back and overcome, with the loss of three pieces of cannon and as many stands of colors. I sent two of the latter to the government with my last despatch; the other, which I then omitted to notice, will be presented to the honorable congress of the state of San Luis Potosi, as a testimonial of the army's gratitude for the patriotic services they had rendered, and the generous sacrifices they had made for its benefit. We moreover captured a travelling forge, and some smaller articles which I will not enumerate. Our cavalry which so bravely executed the order to charge, reached the enemy's rearmost positions; but owing to the nature of the ground, and the fatigue of the men and horses, I did not think it prudent to attempt to dislodge them from those. The battle closed at six in the evening, our troops being then formed on the ground which the Americans had occupied. Our last effort would have been decisive if General Minon had done his part by attacking the enemy in the rear; but he omitted to do it, and I am under the painful necessity of subjecting his conduct to a court martial, that he may explain it.

An action thus contested necessarily involved considerable loss. Ours, in killed and wounded, amounted to more than fifteen hundred men, and that of the enemy was much greater, for we had time to take a view of the great number of their dead.*

The army has done more than could be expected under the laws of nature. It had just been formed, and, as yet, had not acquired discipline or military habits; yet, in marching to the combat it overcome difficulties which might have subdued the stoutest heart. After a march of twenty leagues, sixteen of them without water, and without food, except a single ration, which was dealt out

* We have thought proper to omit the eulogies which the commander bestows upon most of his officers, as they are subjects of interest to no one but a Mexican.

at Encarnacion, it endured the fatigue of combat for two days, and finally triumphed. With all this its physical powers were exhausted. My knowledge of this, and the duty I felt of attending to such a number of wounded, constrained me after remaining a few hours on the field of battle, to fall back upon Agua Nueva, for the relief and refreshment of the troops.

From the impression we had made on the enemy, he did not appear before us for three days. The bearer of a flag of truce, however, arrived with a proposition from General Taylor for an exchange of prisoners, and for our sending for the wounded who remained on the field. He also expressed to me the desire which the Americans felt for the re-establishment of peace. I replied, in order that he might say the same to his general, that we sustained the most sacred of causes—the defence of our territory, and the preservation of our nationality and rights; that we were not the aggressors, and that our government had never offended that of the United States. I observed that we could say nothing of peace while the Americans were on this side of the Bravo, or occupied any part of the Mexican territory, or blockaded our ports; and that we were resolved to perish or vindicate our rights; that fortune might not be always favorable to the enemy, and their experience of the 22d and 23d should convince them that it could change. I added, that the Americans waged against us a war of vandalism, whose excesses outraged those sentiments of humanity, which one civilized nation ought to evince towards another; and that if he would go outside of the apartment, he would still see smoking, which was the fact, the dwellings of Agua Nueva, recently a flourishing, though a small settlement; that the same vestiges of desolation marked the route of his retreat; and that if he would go a little further on to Catana, he would hear the moans of the widows and orphans of innocent victims, who had been sacrificed without necessity.

With respect to the wounded, whom I was invited to send for, I replied that there could be none, save those who had been too much hurt to rise from the field, or those most in the advance, who had remained in the ravines; and that as I had not means for their conveyance, the enemy might take them to Saltillo, under the protection of the laws of nations. As for the prisoners which he offered to ex-

change, I told him I did not know who they could be, unless it were some of our dispersed troops, or some who, from the fatigue of the two previous days, had remained asleep when we moved. In answer to the courtesy the enemy's general had shown with respect to our wounded, I consented in the name of the nation to release all the prisoners we had—those taken both in the battle and at Encarnacion. At the same time I allowed the bearer of the flag, who was a superior officer, of prepossessing appearance and manners, to take the bandage from his eyes, and informed him that it was for him personally, that the honor of this concession was meant. I did it also that he might see our camp and our troops.

As I have said in the preceding paragraph, we remained at the hacienda three days ; but the only supply we could obtain was ninety beeves, and these were consumed on the 25th. The horses were also without forage, and notwithstanding all the efforts for provisions that I could make, many of the wounded had been but once attended to, and some not at all. From the rigor of the climate, the badness and scantiness of the sustenance, the entire want of bread, and the bad quality of the water used in our former bivouacs, a diarrhœa had broken out in the army, and rendered ineffective at least one half of it. I knew that a retrograde movement to our former positions had become inevitable ; but though every thing around me proclaimed this necessity, my feelings revolted against it, solely because I foresaw that from ignorance, malice or presumption, the countermarch would be condemned, and that those who did not witness our situation would imagine the possibility of the army's continuing its operations.

Six days before, when the troops had not suffered so much, nor fought for two successive days, nor been embarrassed with sick and wounded, but were still sound in morale and health, I had not deemed it prudent to augment the labors and difficulties of the army by moving to the right or to the left ; how then would it have been possible to go on operating after all that subsequently occurred ? But let detractors say what they will, the army as well as myself will always answer by an appeal to our conduct, our wishes, and the notorious impossibility of carrying them out. Notwithstanding my conviction, I wished to hear the opinion of the generals and some of the commanders of corps, and to ascertain if they could point out any

resource which had not occurred to me. Without disclosing my own ideas on the subject, I listened to theirs, and they all unanimously, and each one by his opinion separately expressed, showed and demonstrated in various ways, that however good their will to remain, the countermarch of the army had become indispensable, but that this necessity was not forced upon us by the enemy. It was not till I had heard their opinions, that I announced my own accordant resolution, and the proceedings of the council being drawn up, I had the honor of remitting them to your excellency on the 25th.

On the 26th, after I had ordered General Minon to follow the movement, the army commenced its retreat, with a view of occupying the first peopled localities where resources might be obtained, such as Vanegas, Catorce, El Cadral and Matehuala, as also Tula ; but I doubt if in those places proper attention can be given to the sick and wounded ; or the losses we have sustained in those laborious movements be remedied.

The nation for which a triumph has been gained at the cost of so many sufferings, will learn that if we were able to conquer in the midst of so many embarrassments, there will be no doubt as to our final success in the struggle we sustain, if every spirit but rallies to the one sacred object of common defence. A more determined body of men, will not as many imagine suffice for the prosecution of war ; it is indispensable that they be armed, equipped, disciplined and habituated, and that a systematized support for such an organized force be provided. We must bear in mind that we have to combat in a region deficient of all resources, and that every thing for subsistence has to be carried along with the soldiery. The good will of a few will not suffice, but the co-operation of all is needed ; and if we do not cast aside selfish interests and petty passions, we can expect nothing but disaster. The army and myself who have led it, have the satisfaction of knowing that we have demonstrated this truth.

Your excellency will be pleased to report to his excellency the vice-president of the republic, and to present to him my assurance of respect.

God and Liberty ! Rancho de San Salvador, February 27th, 1847.

(Signed)

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

To his Excellency the MINISTER OF WAR AND MARINE,

As every thing relating to the battle of Buena Vista, must be interesting to the reader, we subjoin some extracts from Mexican private letters, which soon obtained publicity, and were disseminated throughout every province of Mexico,

“ We have taken the fortifications of the enemy and four of his positions, which he defended with obstinacy, and every height and every ravine, of which he furiously disputed. We have lost many field and other officers, out of proportion to the number of soldiers, and we have taken from the enemy two flags and three pieces of artillery. There are very few prisoners—four, I believe—the rest are dead.

Our troops are perishing from hunger and thirst. They have not drank water in two days, and have eaten nothing since the day they were at Encarnacion, and a slice of roasted meat at la Vaca.

I am much afraid lest this cause should disperse us to-night, since the soldiers are already scattering; and we have seen bodies of them fighting and charging upon the enemy wherever they thought there was water, caring for nothing; and we have seen them disputing among themselves, totally indifferent to the fire of the enemy, for a piece of ham, found upon the dead Yankees. This night is a fearful one for the republic, since I dread lest we should become disbanded. In conclusion, dear friend, there now remains but little to be done, because we have been pursuing the enemy all day long, with the bayonet, and to-morrow they will be finished. They killed the horse of the general-in-chief with a grape shot.”

Postscript, dated 24th.—“ Since closing my letter, the general-in-chief has ordered the army to Agua Nueva, where there are some cattle and water—water, which is before every thing else. . . . We have lost about a thousand men, and many officers killed and wounded, and our Lombardini among the rest.”

From a letter, Feb. 24th.—“ We have gained a bloody battle, and taken from the enemy standards and artillery. They have come to demand a peace, and they have been answered by the general-in-chief, that ‘until the whole republic is evacuated by them he will not listen to them.’ ”

Private letter, Feb. 23d.—“ We are returning from Angostura, where we beat Taylor all day yesterday, taking from them many

points among the heights, almost inaccessible, and doing so repeatedly, until our troops remained at night established in the position from which we had driven them by main force. We took from them three guns and killed many of their troops.

'To-day a flag of truce has come in from Taylor, asking peace. D. Antonio commanded the eyes of the officer to be unbandaged, that he might see our camp, and that if we had countermarched it was for want of supplies, and not for want of courage.'

Upon the reception of Santa Anna's letter, the governor of San Luis Potosi issued the following proclamation to the inhabitants of Mexico. Both the style and sentiment of this document render it a curiosity.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN :—Our army under the orders of his excellency *Buenmerito de la Patria*, Don Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, with heroic valor, overcoming the afflictions of the most frightful suffering, struggling against the nature of the ground, and even nature herself, which appeared to dispute the victory with us. Our army has severely punished our common enemy on the 22d and 23d instants. It has covered itself with glory. Its illustrious commander has given new fame to his country ; he has reconquered its independence, so perfidiously and vilely menaced. The pride of the North Americans has been humiliated, and our army has restored the national honor, outraged at Resaca and Monterey. The republic commences to-day an advance which will make it respected abroad, and which will bear it on without doubt to that immortality destined for free and independent nations. Our immense territory usurped by this vile and detested horde, will be restored to us intact ; not a single vile foot-print shall dare pollute our soil, and the hero, the genius, the man whom Heaven has bestowed upon us as a precious gift, and the afflictions of the country will very soon complete the sublime enterprise which he has commenced. Union, fellow-countrymen ! Eternal gratitude to the illustrious renowned and well deserving President, General Don Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, and the invincible army which is fighting under his orders, in defence of our dearest interests.

RAMON ADAMO.

San Luis Potosi, Feb. 27, 1847.

Concerning the merits of this battle, we subjoin the remarks of a gentleman in Mexico, one who seems to have the ability to weigh calmly and impartially all the circumstances connected with it.

“ I have not the least doubt that the battle of ‘ Buena Vista ’ is considered by many, if not the greater portion of the people of the United States, as an affair of no very great importance in these war-like times, but that it was a matter of every day occurrence, and, therefore, not much to be admired or wondered at.

In order that these persons may be undeceived, I hope I shall be able to show, from a few FACTS which I have gathered within the last four months, connected with this subject, (having had some considerable knowledge of the Mexican character before,) that it *was* an affair of some little consequence, and of rather vital importance to the people as well as the government of the United States ; that such a fandango as *that* is not got up every day in the year, if we *are* at war with Mexico.

In the first place, General Santa Anna, after the defeat of Ampudia at Monterey, assembled and organized a large army at San Luis Potosi, and every one will agree with me, when I say that this force was so large that Mexico could ill afford to support it in a state of total inactivity. It was evidently for some purpose. That Santa Anna intended it to hold possession of Tampico is not at all probable, as that place was abandoned without a struggle. That he intended it for the defence of Vera Cruz is likewise highly improbable, for the only communication between San Luis and Vera Cruz is by way of the city of Mexico, a distance of over five hundred miles ; and if intended for that service, in all human probability it would have been concentrated at some more convenient point.

The city of Mexico itself, as a matter of course, needed no defence, for it certainly was safe so long as the Mexicans held possession of Vera Cruz. Where then did Santa Anna intend to operate with the army of thirty thousand men which had been raised at such an expense, and the very subsistence of which amounted to thousands of dollars daily ! Was it supposed that he would remain quietly at San Luis Potosi with this mammoth force until attacked ?—at what period he did not know, nor was it in the power of any human being to inform him. A man of known energy of

character like Santa Anna, would be the last person to set himself down in a position that would make him the laughing stock of the whole world, as well as his own nation. It was, therefore, reduced almost to a certainty, that he had some scheme in view, some Herculean task, by which he hoped by a single blow, to regain all that Mexico had lost, and at the same time compel mankind to acknowledge him one of the first military chieftains of the age. I think I shall be able to show that this was his plan; and if I succeed I shall claim no credit to myself, for, as I said before, I only intend to state a few facts.

Many things occurred as early as the 25th of November last to prove to my mind that something of the kind (above alluded to) was on foot as early as that period. Intimations to that effect were made to me by friendly Mexicans of standing and respectability. At the same time they said, if they should go into detail and tell all they knew, they would endanger their own necks. Since the defeat of Santa Anna at Buena Vista, and the consequent failure of his campaign, (which was for the recovery of the valley of the Rio del Norte, and the total extermination of every thing American from this part of Mexico,) these men speak out fearlessly; for, notwithstanding they love their country, they despise their rulers.

As early as the 25th of November, I say, Santa Anna commenced his operations; to show that I am not far from correct, I beg leave to refer to the letter of Lieutenant Abert, topographical engineer, to show that Santa Fe was included, as well as the lower part of the Rio Grande, that, notwithstanding there seems to have been a screw loose as regards the low country, the Santa Feans played their part, and commenced operations on the day appointed. Santa Anna's troops were to be employed in this way:—A portion of them were to occupy Victoria, to form a nucleus around which the militia of the country in that vicinity and Matamoras might rally. Another force was to occupy Cadareita and China, to form another nucleus for the rancheros between Camargo, Laredo, and the mountains.

Secret circulars were sent to the alcaldes of the different towns, calling on them for every man that could possibly be spared, with instructions to equip them as well as they could, saying at the same time that, if they had not fire-arms, they must arm them with long knives,

spears, and every warlike weapon their imaginations could devise. Santa Anna was to advance from San Luis and attack the Americans at their most advanced position, with a force that could not be resisted; was to drive them or compel them to surrender, and if they attempted to retreat, his reserve force, (stationed as before described) was to fall upon and cut them to pieces in their flight. The 25th of December was the great day appointed.

All the powers of the church were called into requisition to aid in the laudable and patriotic enterprise. Masses were said in the churches, the aid of Divine Providence was invoked, and all the sinews of the nation were to be put forth for the rescue of their beloved country. From all these causes, success was looked upon as certain. But when the people reflected that the "great Santa Anna" was at the helm, they looked upon defeat as a matter of total impossibility. The only reason I have heard assigned for Santa Anna's not carrying out his plan on the day appointed, is the one assigned by a Mexican captain, taken prisoner at Buena Vista, viz: "that General Taylor had all his veteran regulars within striking distance of Saltillo;" that "General Santa Anna did not consider himself equal to the task," notwithstanding the authorities at the city of Mexico were goading him on; and some of his officers, who had not yet seen the American elephant, actually charged him with "cowardice."

I have not the least doubt that this was the real cause for his not advancing at the time specified. But what must have been his delight and agreeable surprise when the withdrawal of nearly all General Taylor's regulars with two or three batteries of artillery, was announced to him at San Luis! Well may he have said, "It is not true—it cannot be possible! there must be some mistake!" And not until he was officially notified by the Mexican authorities at Saltillo would he believe a word of it. Fresh couriers were sent in all directions through the valley of the Rio Grande, announcing to the people this ridiculous story, that the "American general had become alarmed at hearing there were thirty thousand troops at San Luis, and had consequently withdrawn all the regulars, and had left the volunteers, on account of their barbarity to the inhabitants, to be sacrificed." You will be surprised when I tell you that even this

story was believed by thousands. As will be seen by calculating the time between the march of General Worth from Saltillo, and the attack on General Taylor at Buena Vista, (when it is considered that San Luis is three hundred miles from that point,) Santa Anna did not long delay his movements.

His large bodies of cavalry were despatched immediately in different directions. General Minon was sent to reconnoitre General Taylor at Saltillo; General Valencia to carry on the operations in the vicinity of Victoria, San Fernando, and Matamoras—while General Urrea was sent to play his part in the vicinity of Camargo, China and Monterey. The plan worked well; the rancheros in all parts of the valley left their homes and joined Valencia and Urrea, and so anxious were the inhabitants at and near Presidio, Rio Grande, to give a good account of themselves, that they raised funds by subscription and sent a party of traders to San Antonio, Texas, and purchased all the powder to be had in that town as early as the 30th of January.

Mexican expresses were running in all parts of the country; and everything was on the “*qui vive*” for the great day when Santa Anna should “give the word” which would set this overwhelming machine in motion. Fifteen hundred rancheros joined Urrea in one day. The inhabitants of all classes left the principal towns where our troops were quartered; and those who had friends among the Americans besought them with *tears in their eyes* to leave the country, saying that they “*knew* their throats would be cut if they remained.” A very respectable Mexican said to me, that he “was not an alarmist, but that he knew Santa Anna was advancing with an overwhelming force, and that notwithstanding he believed one American soldier to be equal to three Mexicans, yet he feared that it would be impossible for General Taylor to withstand the shock.”

Santa Anna's unparalleled march against San Antonio, Texas, in 1836, did not exceed the rapidity with which he moved the main body of his army from San Luis to Agua Nueva. So certain was he of victory, that he only took twelve days' provisions with him, saying to his men, “the immense granaries of the enemy are before you; you have only to go and take them.” On they moved, full of life, full of hope; certain beyond a doubt that they should

carry everything before them ; and Santa Anna himself looked forward to the day when he would enjoy a reputation not inferior to that of Napoleon himself. Well may they have raised the shout when they found the Americans had abandoned their camp at Agua Nueva. Well may Santa Anna have said to his men (in orders) "the northern barbarians, the despoilers of your soil, the desecrators of your churches, are fleeing before you ; onward ! onward, and avenge your slaughtered countrymen."

On they rolled like an avalanche, carrying everything before them—but what was their surprise, on arriving at the plain of Buena Vista, to behold that little "Spartan band" standing cool, firm and steady, with that old veteran, as firm as the Sierra Madre itself, at their head ! What must have been his chagrin and mortification, when, after two days hard fighting, hand to hand, he found his army cut to pieces, and his enemy standing firmer than ever, ready to renew the conflict on the morrow ! He, the great Napoleon of the West, who had just returned from exile, who had promised everything to Mexico and her people, found himself and his schemes thwarted at the outset.

His fall was so great, and his defeat so signal, (all things considered,) that I can well account for his treating Major Bliss in the cavalier manner that he did, when on the morning of the 24th, that officer applied to him for an exchange of prisoners. His all was gone. Everything, so far as he was concerned, was lost, and that, too, by a handful of undisciplined volunteers. But it will never be forgotten that Zachary Taylor was their general.

It is impossible to calculate the disaster that would have befallen us, if Gen. Taylor had not stood like a firm old oak and braved the storm as he did. Verily, everything American would have been sacrificed, and few would have been left to tell the disastrous tale."

But even the bravery and firmness of General Taylor, would not have been sufficient to avert total defeat and ruin at Buena Vista, if he had not been supported by the activity, gallantry and military experience of General Wool. During one of the most critical periods of the battle previous to General Taylor's return from Saltillo, General Wool had the sole command, and throughout the remainder of the battle he was the second in command and the acting

officer in directing the details of the several subordinate actions. General Taylor fully appreciated his services; and in the burst of feeling at their interview after the battle, he did him no more than simple justice. We shall notice the services of General Wool in this battle more particularly in the Appendix.

The American soldiers were congratulated for their bravery in the following terms.

ORDERS, (NO. II.)

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION,
Buena Vista, Feb. 26, 1847.

1. The Commanding General has the grateful task of congratulating the troops upon the brilliant success which attended their arms in the conflicts of the 22d and 23d. Confident in the immense superiority of numbers, and stimulated by the presence of a distinguished leader, the Mexican troops were yet repulsed in every effort to force our lines; and finally withdrew with immense loss from the field.

2. The General would express his obligations to the officers and men engaged, for the cordial support which they rendered throughout the action. It will be his highest pride to bring to the notice of the government, the conspicuous gallantry of particular officers and corps, whose unwavering steadiness more than once saved the fortunes of the day. He would also express his high satisfaction with the conduct of the small command left to hold Saltillo. Though not so seriously engaged as their comrades, their services were very important, and efficiently rendered. While bestowing this just tribute to the conduct of the troops, the General deeply regrets to say, that there were not a few exceptions. He trusts that those who fled ingloriously to Buena Vista, and even to Saltillo, will seek an opportunity to retrieve their reputation, and to emulate the bravery of their comrades, who bore the brunt of the battle, and sustained against fearful odds the honor of the flag.

The exultation of success is checked by the heavy sacrifice of life which it has cost, embracing many officers of high rank and rare merit. While the sympathies of a grateful country will be given to the bereaved families and friends of those who nobly fell,

their illustrious example will remain for the benefit and admiration of the army.

By order of Major General Taylor.

W. W. S. BLISS, Assist. Adjt. Gen.

We now take leave of the bloody field of Buena Vista. Long will it be remembered in the annals of nations. Future generations will dwell with mingled emotions on its scenes of glory and suffering. The imagination will dwell upon its impetuous charges, its terrible repulses, the shouts of victory and the groans of the wounded; the rejoicing of the conquerors, the terrified flight of the vanquished, and the mournful scenes of that field of carnage, where the priest administers consolation to the dying, while the callous camp follower plunders the dead.





A Guerilla.

CHAPTER XI.

Events subsequent to the Battle of Buena Vista.



THE battle of Buena Vista, or Angostura, has been the crowning point of General Taylor's brilliant campaign in Mexico. Since that time the enemy have not dared to meet him in the field, and the subsequent operations of his army are few and unimportant.

On the 2d of March, Mr. Crittenden was sent to Washington with General Taylor's despatches. He was accompanied by

two hundred and sixty troops and one hundred and fifty wagons, under Major Geddings. When near Seralvo they encountered General Urrea with fifteen hundred Mexicans, and a battle took place, of which we extract the amount, in substance, from the major's report.

On Sunday afternoon, the 7th instant, the enemy's lancers commenced the attack, sweeping by the flanks and rear of the Americans, in order to throw them into confusion. They were driven back with some loss, by the park of artillery, and some companies of infantry. Many of the drivers now deserted the teams, of which about forty were captured and burned by the enemy. One of them contained the ammunition, which exploded, killing and wounding ten Mexicans, and inspiring a number with panic and disorder. Having thus broken the train of wagons, the enemy placed themselves between the rear guard and main body, in order the more securely to capture Captain Keneally's company, and a piece of artillery which formed the rear. Captain Bradley was immediately ordered to attempt communication, but at that moment Keneally himself arrived, stating that his company was surrounded, and that he had received under cover of a flag, the following note :—

“The Colonel Langberg offers to all the soldiers life and security, if you will surrender yourself.

EMELIO LANGBERG,
Foreign Officer.”

He also stated that he had been favored with an interview with Langberg, who, after stating that his force amounted to sixteen hundred men, gave him an hour to decide upon a surrender. Upon receiving this intelligence, Major Giddings immediately requested that the truce might terminate, and soon after Captain Bradley cut his way through the Mexican host and gained the rear. This saved the wagons ; and toward night the enemy drew off toward Seralvo. During the night, as the troops were suffering much for want of water, a party of Mexican cavalry were driven from some neighboring streams ; and before morning the whole body of the enemy evacuated the town.

In this affair, two privates of Captain Bradley's company, and fifteen teamsters were killed ; while the Mexicans lost in killed and wounded forty-five.

The Americans entered Seralvo on the next morning, where Crittenden was detained for some days in consequence of the teamsters refusing to proceed without a stronger escort. At the end of this time Colonel Curtis arrived from Camargo with a large body of troops, being on his route to Monterey in pursuit of General Urrea. The colonel continued his pursuit until the 18th, when he met General Taylor near Marin. The General had left Agua Nueva, with May's dragoons and two companies of Bragg's artillery, also for the purpose of capturing Urrea, whom he had understood to be rapidly gaining the mountains with five thousand lancers and rancheros. He was now informed that on the night previous, the Mexican general having heard of his approach, had retreated from Marin, where he had been stationed, with the design of attacking Curtis. The colonel's force amounted to twelve hundred infantry, one company of dragoons and two field pieces; and the combined army moved next morning from Marin. The pursuit continued until the army had reached Caidereta, where it was ascertained that Urrea was beyond the mountains. General Taylor then returned towards Monterey, and pitched his camp at the Walnut Springs, four miles from that city.

On the 31st, the General issued the following proclamation:—

The General-in-chief of the American forces to the inhabitants of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, and Coahuila.

When the American troops first crossed the frontier and entered the above states, it was with the intention, publicly declared to you, of making war, not upon the peaceful citizens of the soil, but upon the central government of the republic, with a view to obtain an early and an honorable peace.

The undersigned was authorized by his government to levy contributions upon the people for the support of his army, but unwilling to throw the heavy burden of the war upon those, who with few exceptions, manifested a neutral disposition, he has continued from the first to pay punctually and liberally for all supplies drawn from the country for the support of his troops.

He has used every effort to cause the war to bear lightly upon the people of these states, and he had hoped by these means, to retain their confidence and to insure their neutrality, in the strife

between his government and that of Mexico ; but he regrets to say that his kindness has not been appreciated, but has been met by acts of hostility and plunder. The citizens of the country, instead of pursuing their avocations quietly at home, have, in armed bands, waylaid the roads, and under the direction, and with the support of government troops, have destroyed trains and murdered drivers under circumstances of atrocity which disgrace humanity.

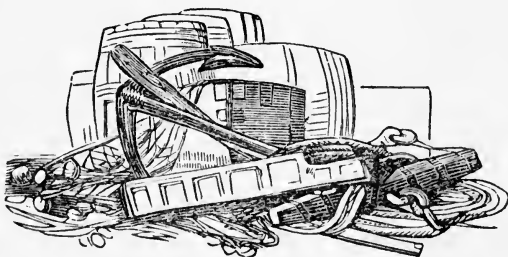
The lives of those who were thus wantonly put to death cannot be restored ; but the undersigned requires from the people of the country, an indemnification for the loss sustained by the destruction of the trains, and the pillage of their contents. To that end an estimate will be made by the proper officers of the entire loss, and this loss must be made good either in money, or in the products of the country, by the community at large of the states of Tamaulipas, New Leon, and Coahuila, each district or juzgado paying its just proportion.

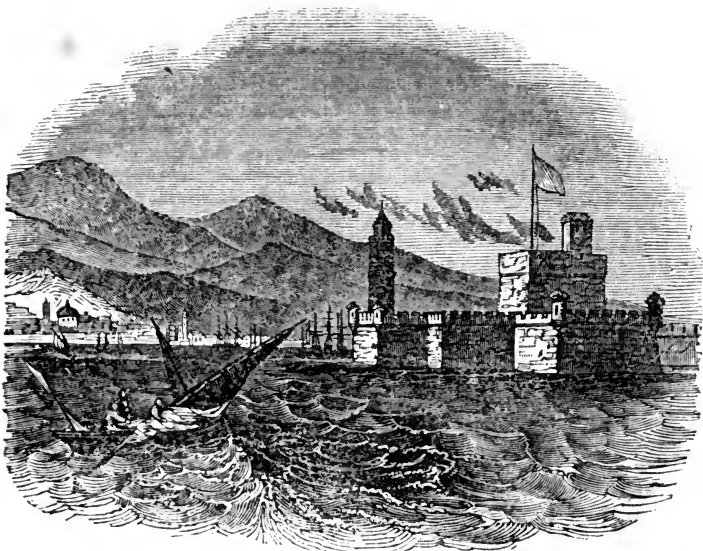
It is expected that the rich will bear their full share. And the undersigned calls upon all good citizens to remain absolutely neutral, and to give no countenance to the bands which infest the country for the purpose of murder and pillage. It is his anxious desire to continue the same policy as heretofore ; and he trusts that the course of the citizens will enable him to do so.

Z. TAYLOR.

Maj. Gen. U. S. A.

HEAD-QUARTERS at Monterey, March 31, 1847.

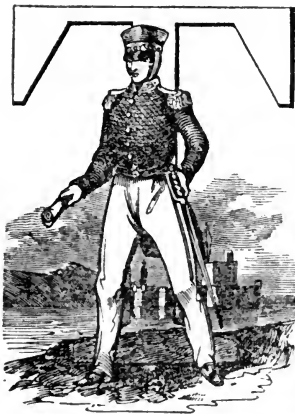




Castle of San Juan de Ulloa.

CHAPTER XIII.

Siege of Vera Cruz.



HE course of events now takes us to southern Mexico. While General Taylor and the army of occupation were thus sustaining the glory of their flag, on the Rio Grande, most important operations were going forward under General Winfield Scott, who, as we have stated, had been appointed by government to supersede Taylor. Of these operations, it may not be improper to give a concise account.*

General Taylor had been placed in command at Texas, through the recom-

* WINFIELD SCOTT was educated for the profession of the law. He was born on the 13th of June, 1786, in the neighborhood of Petersburg, Va. He

mentation of General Scott. After the battles on the Rio Bravo, the latter officer was given the supreme command in that region, and reached the seat of war on January 1st, 1847.

has enjoyed the benefits of a liberal education, being placed early in life at the high school of Richmond, and subsequently passed through William and Mary College. He entered the army while the difficulties concerning impressment were pending, and on the 3d of May, 1808, received his first appointment as captain of light artillery. His characteristic precision soon brought him into the favorable notice of his superiors, and led to his promotion as lieutenant-colonel, in July, 1812. In October of that year he assisted Lieutenant Elliot in cutting out the Adams and Caledonia from under Fort Erie, and afterwards defended both vessels with success against a party of British. At Queenstown Heights, he so distinguished himself by personal bravery, as to be intrusted with the company of Colonel Van Rensselaer, when that officer had been wounded. Here his duties were arduous. The British who were on the point of retreating, received large reinforcements of Indians and regulars from Fort George, and renewed the fight with desperate energy. The American militia, about three hundred, had crossed the river to the Canada side, and were now attacked by thirteen hundred of the enemy, of whom nine hundred were fresh troops. They fought heroically for several hours, but were obliged to surrender, and were marched to Quebec. Scott was among them, but was afterwards exchanged and returned to Boston.

In 1813, the attention of the American government was directed to the importance of strengthening the defences in the north. The fortifications were repaired, and additional troops ordered to the frontier; and in May, Colonel Scott joined the army near Niagara, as adjutant-general. Here they were joined by the troops which had been engaged at the capture of York, and General Dearborn, the commander-in-chief, carried on active preparations for an attack on Fort George. Toward the end of May these were deemed sufficiently advanced to warrant the embarkation of the army, which took place before daylight of the next morning. Colonel Scott commanded the advance, which consisted of a detachment of the twenty-second regiment, Forsythe's corps of riflemen, two companies of his own regiment, the second artillery, one company of the third artillery, and a company of dismounted dragoons, numbering in all about six hundred men. The whole army crossed the river without accident, and marched up the rocky shore of the Canada side, with Colonel Scott in advance, unappalled by a heavy fire which a party of British incessantly poured upon them. The advance rushed up towards the enemy, but were several times repulsed, until the arrival of the first brigade, when a spirited action of ten minutes ensued, at the end of which, the enemy retreated, and were pursued toward the village of Fort George. The whole command then landed and formed, silencing a somewhat annoying fire of shells from the village. The enemy evacuated the fort, and were pursued to some distance, but with little effect. Colonel Scott took down the flag of the fort with his own hands, and afterwards rejoined his column, and continued the pursuit toward Queens-town. When within a few miles of that place, they received an order from the commander-in-chief, directing them to return, and encamp at Newark. The exhausted army obeyed, and retired to Fort George, where it passed the night.

In July 1813, Colonel Scott received the command of a regiment, and was concerned in the affair of Burlington heights, the burning of York, and the

The confidence of government in his military abilities, as well as the ample powers intrusted to him, will be understood from the following order, directing him to the seat of war.

unsuccessful descent upon Montreal. In the great battles on the frontier in 1814 he figured most conspicuously, and to him, in a great measure, is their success owing. The following account of the engagement at Bridgewater, which we abridge from the journal of one who shared its dangers, will convey some idea of the nature of his services.

"About noon of the 25th, the commander-in-chief was informed that the enemy were landing at Lewistown, and that our baggage and stores were in danger of immediate capture. It was conceived that the most effectual method of recalling him from this object, was to put the army in motion toward Queens-town. If he was in the field upon the Canada side, our business was to fight him without loss of time, as General Brown had almost ceased to hope for reinforcements or co-operation from any quarter. The support upon which the general had hitherto relied, had failed to appear, and the enemy having power of the lake could reinforce at pleasure. General Scott with the first brigade, Towson's artillery, and all the dragoons and mounted men were accordingly put in march on the road leading toward Queenstown. He was particularly instructed to report if the enemy appeared, and to call for assistance if necessary. On arriving near the falls, he learned that the enemy were in force behind a narrow piece of woods directly in his front, and having despatched information of the fact, he advanced upon them. Hearing the noise of artillery, General Brown ordered the second brigade and all the artillery to march as rapidly as possible to Scott's support, and rode down in person with his aids, towards the scene of action. On arriving there, the general found that Scott had passed the wood, and engaged the enemy on the Queenstown road, with three regiments and Towson's artillery, one regiment having been thrown to the right to be governed by circumstances.

Knowing that these troops had suffered severely in the contest, General Brown determined to interpose a new line with the advancing troops, and thus disengage General Scott and hold his brigade in reserve. By this time Captains Biddle and Ritchie's companies of artillery had come into action, and the head of General Ripley's column was nearly up with the right of Scott's line."

The author then goes on to describe the heat of the engagement, and the capture of the enemy's battery by Colonel Miller, and continues:—

"General Ripley now urged the commander-in-chief to order up Scott, who had all this time been held in reserve with three of his battalions. The commander rode in person to General Scott, and ordered him to advance. As Scott advanced toward Ripley's right, General Brown passed to the left to speak with General Porter, whose militia were at that moment thrown into some confusion by a most galling and deadly fire from the enemy. They were, however, kept to their duty by the exertions of their gallant chief, and most nobly sustained the conflict. The enemy were repulsed and again driven out of sight, but in a short time were distinctly seen advancing in great force upon the main line, under Ripley and Porter. The direction that General Scott had given to his column, would have enabled him within five minutes, to have formed line in the rear of the enemy's right, and thus bring it between two fires. But in a most unexpected moment, a flank fire from a party of the enemy concealed upon our left, falling upon the centre of Scott's command, when in open column, blasted

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON,
November 23d, 1846.

SIR :—The President several days since communicated in person, to you, his orders to repair to Mexico, to take the command of the forces there assembled, and particularly to organize and set on foot, an expedition to operate on the Gulf coast, if on arriving at the theatre of action, you shall deem it to be practicable. It is not proposed to control your operations by definite and positive instructions, but you are left to prosecute them as your judgment, under a full view of all the circumstances, shall dictate. The work is before you, and the means provided or to be provided, for accomplishing it, are committed to you in the full confidence that you will use them to the best advantage.

The objects which it is desirable to obtain have been indicated, and it is hoped that you will have the requisite force to accomplish them.

Of this you must be the judge when preparations are made, and the time for action arrived.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. MARCY,
Secretary of War

GEN. WINFIELD SCOTT.

our proud expectations. His column was severed in two, one part passing to the rear, the other by the right flank of platoons toward our main line. About this time General Brown received his first wound, a musket ball passing through his right thigh. A few minutes after, Captain Spencer, his aid, received a mortal wound. By this time the enemy had nearly closed with our main line. Moving up to the left of this line, General Brown received a violent blow from a ball, upon his left side. It did not enter, but nearly unhorsed him with its force. He met with Colonel Wood, and thought proper to inform him of his condition. The colonel exclaimed with great emotion, 'Never mind, my dear general; you are gaining the greatest victory that was ever gained by your nation.' 'His gallant soul (says General Brown,) was exclusively occupied with the battle that was then raging with redoubled fury.' "

In this battle Scott was so severely wounded that his life was despaired of; but under the careful treatment of Drs. Physic and Chapman he was completely cured. Congress rewarded his bravery by a gold medal, and the rank of *Major-General*, the highest in the American army; and the legislatures of New York and Virginia voted him their thanks, and a sword from each. He was in the Seminole war, but was not permitted to distinguish himself.

On horseback, General Scott is said to present a fine appearance, being six feet four inches high, and possessing a commanding figure. He is distinguished for the clearness of his military plans, the rapidity of their execution, and especially the mathematical precision which distinguishes all his movements. Rare natural talents, carefully improved by a sound judgment, render him worthy to command the forces of America.

The first movement of General Scott, was to plan an attack upon Vera Cruz, an important city, defended by a castle whose position and fortifications rendered it the key of central Mexico, and which was considered impregnable.* As at Monterey, the inhabitants had increased its defences by planting cannon upon the tops of the houses, and through holes in the walls; and each street was commanded by cross batteries throughout its whole extent.

The forces of General Scott were utterly inadequate for either a siege or an assault upon such a place. He was therefore obliged to

* The Castle of San Juan de Ulloa is unquestionably the most celebrated of all American fortresses. Its construction was commenced, in the year 1582, upon a bar or bank in front of the town of Vera Cruz, at the distance of 1062 Castilian varas (yards), and it is entirely surrounded by water. The centre of the area occupied by this fortress is a small island upon which Juan de Grajalva landed, a year previous to the arrival of Cortez upon our continent, and at that period it accidentally received the name which it retains to this day. It seems that there was a shrine or temple erected upon it, in which human victims were sacrificed to the Indian gods; and as the Spaniards were informed these offerings were made, in accordance with the commands of the kings of *Acolhua*, they confounded or abbreviated this name into *Ulloa*, which they affixed to the island.

Sixty-one years after the conquest, the work was undertaken, and although it seems to have been designed not only to defend Vera Cruz, but to attack it in case of necessity, that city was, nevertheless, sacked by the pirates, under the renowned freebooter Lorencillo, in the year 1683.

The cost of the castle has been estimated by various writers to have amounted to the sum of forty millions of dollars, and this may be regarded as no exaggeration, if we consider the difficulty of obtaining some of the materials of which it is composed, and the fact that a large portion of it is built on foundations laid in the sea, whose waves it has resisted for more than two centuries.

According to a report made on the 17th of January, 1775, it was the opinion of a council of war, composed of distinguished officers, that this fortress, after all its defences were completed, would require a garrison for effective service, composed of 1700 infantry, 300 artillery, 228 sailors, and 100 supernumeraries.

The *exterior polygon* of the castle, which faces Vera Cruz, is three hundred yards long, while that which defends the north channel, is at least two hundred. Besides these, there is a low battery, situated in the bastion of Santiago, which doubles the fire on that channel. The southern channel is also defended by the battery of San Miguel.

The whole fort is constructed of *Madrepora Astrea*, a species of soft coral, which abounds in the neighboring islands. The walls are about five yards in thickness, their exterior being faced with hard stone. The castle is amply supplied with water from seven cisterns, which contain severally 24,948, 17,884, 19,000, 6,000, 16,685, 4,500, 4,752—in all 93,767—cubic feet of water.

Before the castle was attacked by the French in 1838, it was defended by 177 pieces of various calibre—instead of 370, its full equipment.

In the year 1844, there were in the castle and city the following munitions, belonging to the artillery:—

order a detachment from General Taylor's army, which reached him in February, and augmented his force to about 12,000 men.

In the same month, the Ondiaka was wrecked near the island of Lobos, having on board a regiment of Louisiana volunteers, under the

IN SAN JUAN DE ULLOA.

10 (84 pr.) Paixhan guns,	5 (brass) 14 inch mortar
10 (64 pr.) " "	3 (iron) 14 "
37 (brass) 24 pounders,	1 (brass) 18 "
25 (iron) 24 "	5 (iron) 18 "
2 (iron) 18 "	1 (brass) 9 "
5 (brass) 16 "	6 (brass) 8 "
6 (iron) 16 "	—

21 mortars, *Total.*

95 cannon, *Total.*

IN VERA CRUZ.

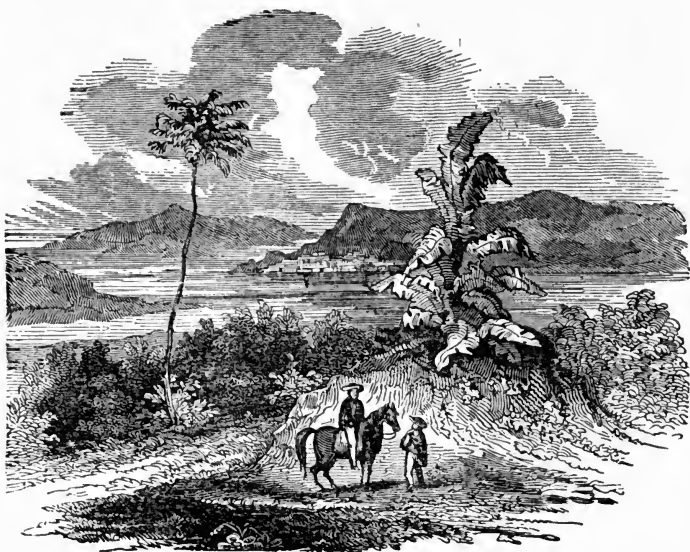
1 (iron) 24 pounder .	6 (iron) 6 "
1 (brass) 18 "	15 (brass) 4 "
14 (brass) 12 "	6 (brass) 3 "
8 (iron) 12 "	13 (iron) 3 "
18 (brass) 18 "	—
7 (iron) 8 "	
10 (brass) 6 "	

Total, 99 cannon, and seven mortars.

In the same year the Mexican government entered into a contract with Senor Escandor, by which that gentleman was bound to furnish the castle with the following additional munitions:—53,342 hollow balls, 35,136 solid do., 5000 English muskets, 3000 tercerolas, 3000 cavalry swords, 5,800 infantry swords, 2000 musicians' do., 10 Paixhan guns, 15, 8 and 12 pounders, 8 obuses. All these were delivered except 48,000 hollow projectiles, and 13,550 solid.—*Niles' Register*, 1847.

The strength of this celebrated castle is thus described by an officer in the American army.—“The castle of Vera Cruz is no more what it was when the French carried it, *than is a full grown man to an infant*. Then there were no guns above the calibre of 24 pounds, and the few of them, were most miserably served. The magazines unarched were not bomb-proof. The powder was of such an inferior character, that not a shot penetrated a French ship, but at the close of the engagement, were stuck about the sides of the shipping, like so many balls of mud; and in addition to all this, the commanding officer, having been instructed not to fire the first gun, permitted the French squadron to come up and take its position as quietly, as though mooring to pass the winter season.

Now let us see what effect time and a severe lesson have effected. There are at present mounted, nearly 300 cannon and wherever it has been possible to train a gun upon the channel of approach, it is planted; so that a fleet moving up to the attack, must be exposed to the concentrated fire of seventy cannon, over a distance of two miles, before it can get into position to return a shot. The castle of San Juan is about three eighths of a mile from the city, and is supported by a water-battery at the northwest angle of the town, of fifty 32 and 42 pound guns, all of which would bear upon a squadron passing up,



T a m p i c o.

command of Colonel de Russy. Soon after gaining the land, they were encountered by a large Mexican force under General Cos, who demanded their immediate surrender. Although the colonel's men were without arms, he immediately placed them in full battle array, in the meantime delaying an answer to the summons, until night. He then lighted his fires, deserted his heavy baggage, and marched rapidly toward the head-quarters at Tampico, which he reached without meeting with opposition.

from the moment it arrived within range, until within musket shot. The garrison at this time is composed of 2000 men. In the event of an attack, they would with the most perfect safety, retire within the casemates (which are as impervious to shot as the sides of Mount Orizaba) until the ammunition of the assailing force was expended, when they would return to their guns and sweep the waters, with the most terrific effect. The officer commanding the castle lately sent official word "that if the commodore would bring his fleet up, he might fire until there was not a shot in the locker, and he would promise him not to return a gun until he was done."

A naval force under Commodore Conner had been ordered to co-operate with General Scott, while he conducted the attack by land. Accordingly he embarked at the depot, with his whole force, and on the 7th of March arrived at Anton Lizardo.

In company with Commodore Conner, General Scott then made a reconnoissance of the city's castle and coast, and selected a position on the beach, west of the island of Sacrificios, as the most suitable place for the landing of his troops. Active preparations were immediately commenced, and the landing was effected on the 9th, without any opposition from the enemy.

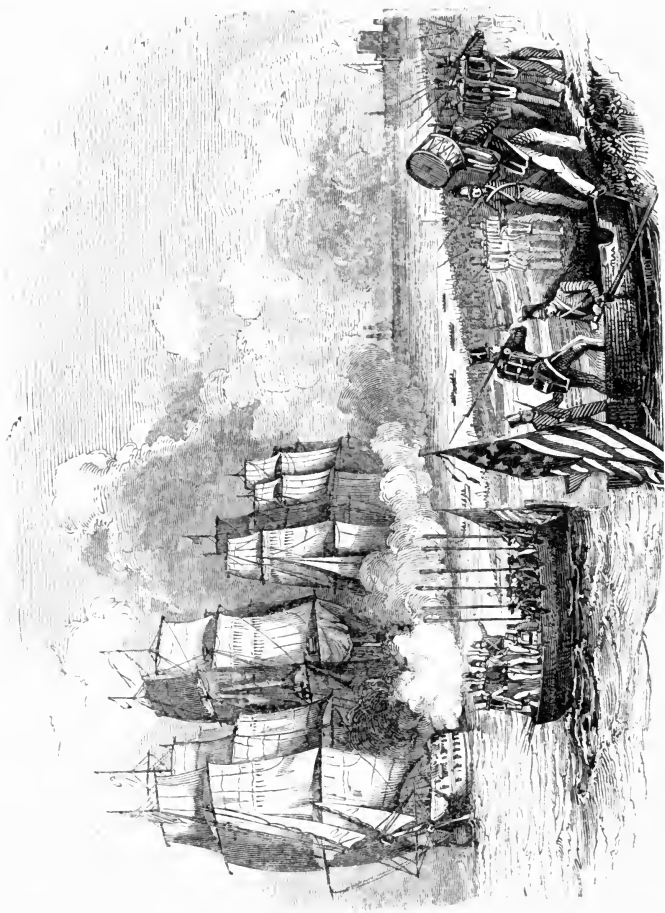
An eye witness thus describes the landing.

"A more stirring spectacle has probably never been witnessed in America. In the first line there were no less than seventy heavy surf-boats, containing nearly 4000 regulars, all of whom expected to meet the enemy before they struck the shore.

Notwithstanding this, every man was anxious to be first, and plunged into the water waist deep. As they reached the shore the 'stars and stripes' were instantly floating, a rush was made for the sand hills, and amid loud shouts the troops pressed onward. Three long and loud cheers rose from their comrades still on board, awaiting to be embarked, and meanwhile the tops and every portion of the foreign vessels, were crowded with spectators of the scene. Not one who witnessed it, will ever forget the landing. Why the Mexicans did not oppose us is a greater mystery than ever, considering their great advantages at the time, and that they have since opposed every step of our advance."

The detailed preparations are given in the despatch of Commodore Conner as follows :—

The anchorage near this place being extremely contracted, it became necessary in order to avoid crowding it with an undue number of vessels, to transfer most of the troops to the vessels of war, for transportation to Sacrificios. Accordingly on the morning of the 9th at daylight, all necessary preparations having been previously made, this transfer was commenced. The frigates received on board between twenty-five and twenty-eight hundred men each, with their arms and accoutrements, and the sloops and smaller vessels, numbers in proportion. This part of the movement was completed about



Landing of the American Troops at Vera Cruz.

11 o'clock A. M., and a few minutes thereafter, the squadron under my command, accompanied by the commanding general, in the steamship *Massachusetts*, and such of the transports as had been selected for the purpose, got under way. Each ship came in and anchored without the slightest disorder, in the small space allotted to her—the harbor being still very much crowded, notwithstanding the number of transports we had left behind.

Whilst we were transferring the troops from the ships to the surf-boats, I directed the steamers *Spitfire* and *Vixen*, and five gun-boats to form a line parallel with, and close into the beach to cover the landing. This order was promptly executed, and these small vessels from the lightness of their draught, were enabled to take positions within good grape range of the shore. As the boats severally received their complements of troops, they assembled in a line abreast, between the fleet and the gun-boats; and when all were ready they pulled in together, under a guidance of a number of officers of the squadron, who had been detailed for this purpose. General Worth commanded this, the first line of the army, and had the satisfaction of forming his command on the beach and neighboring heights just before sunset. Four thousand five hundred men were thus thrown on shore almost simultaneously. No enemy appeared to offer us the slightest opposition. The whole army consisting of upwards of 10,000 men, were thus safely deposited on shore, without the slightest accident of any kind.

General Scott has now with him upwards of 11,000 men. At his request I permitted the marines of the squadron, under Captain Edson, to join him as a part of the 3d regiment of artillery. The general-in-chief landed this morning, and the army put itself in motion at an early hour, to form its lines around the city. There has been some distant firing of shot and shells from the town and castle upon the troops, as they advanced, but without result."

Meanwhile the Mexicans were not idle. Although they unwisely omitted a timely and vigorous opposition to the landing, yet every preparation was going forward to defend their fortress. At the same time the following proclamation was issued by the governor.

COMPATRIOTS—Having seen the enemy's squadron, so long expected, enter this port, in conjunction with the vessels containing the

mercenary troops destined to operate against this heroic city, it is the moment to perform the obligations contracted to our country, with valor, and boldly sustain her sacred rights.

COMRADES—My heart beats with inexpressible satisfaction at the desire that animates us to measure our arms with the daring invaders. They present themselves this moment in stronger force, but you well know their forces were never superior in discipline nor valor. Possessing both advantages, you see the struggle in view for our hearths, in defence of your interests and your families, in fact, for the independence and liberty of your dear country, united to that justice which assists us. These will be sufficient incentives to inflame your courage, and convert you into heroes.

Brave and suffering veterans ! Worthy soldiers of the National Guard ! The hour of combat is near ! The capital of your state is the point of American ambition ! I trust our enemies will find their sepulchres in the ports of the same city which they pretend to possess, and before we all succumb, we will cause to descend to posterity a lesson of virtue and honor.

These are the vows of your compatriot and friend,

JUAN MORALES.

Some days after the landing, the Americans were joined by Captains Ker and Thornton, and Colonel Harney, accompanied by a considerable body of men, together with many horses.

On the 11th, General Scott received a note from Senor Don Afilass G. de Escalante, the Spanish consul at the city, requesting that the American army would respect the persons and property of the Spanish residents, not only during the siege, but also in case of an assault. This was answered by the American general on the 13th. In his note, he acknowledged in very polite terms the relation between Spain and the United States, and signified his entire willingness to accede to the request of the consul ; with a promise to conform to it as far as practicable ; but he reminded him of the difficulty of discriminating between friend and foe, especially during the confusion of an assault by night, and that on such an occasion, even a consular flag could scarcely be distinguished. Accompanying the answer was a printed safeguard with the sign-manual of General Scott, affording protection to all Spanish residents, and a similar one

for the British consul. The following is a copy of the safeguard.

“By authority of Major General Scott, general-in-chief of the armies of the United States—The person, the family, and the property of the British consul, residing in Vera Cruz, his house and its contents are placed under the safeguard of the army of the United States. To offer any violence or injury to them is expressly forbidden; on the contrary, it is ordered that safety and protection be given to him and them in case of need.”

A similar letter was addressed to Monsieur A. Gloux, the French consul, with a request that he would deliver to the Prussian consul the safeguard enclosed for him.*

On the 22d, General Scott summoned the town and garrison to surrender, assuring them that they should be treated with all the honors of war. The commandant replied, that intrusted as he was with a high national duty, it became him to use every exertion in order to fulfil it; that he expected a vigorous assault, and was prepared to meet it; and that General Scott might commence hostilities as soon as convenient.

When the flag returned with this intelligence, the bombardment commenced in earnest. Seven mortars were then in battery, and were ordered by General Scott to open immediately upon the city. Shortly after, all the smaller vessels of Commodore Perry's† squadron, comprising two steamers and five schooners, approached the city within about a mile and a quarter, according to previous arrangement, and being partially covered from the guns of the castle, they opened a brisk fire upon the city. This was continued by both batteries and vessels, with but little interruption on the part of the latter until nine o'clock in the morning. The night scene was grand and terrible. Bombs and rockets traversed the blazing pathway of battle, contrasting strangely with the dense gloom that surrounded them; while the roaring of mortars, the bursting of bombs,

* Whosoever belonging to the armies of the United States employed in foreign parts, shall force a safeguard shall suffer death.—*Fifty-fifth Article of War.*

† Commodore Perry had been appointed by government to supersede Commodore Conner.

the crashing of buildings, and the dim cry of the sufferers heard faintly, as it struggled with the distance, rendered that night worthy of remembrance to every beholder.*

In the morning, it became evident that the position of the assaulting vessels was one of great danger, and they were therefore withdrawn. About the same time, three additional mortars were placed in battery, and added their terrible discharges to the others. The fire was now most destructive to the city; house after house was heard to fall, and the bombs rattled and echoed like hail along the ploughed-up streets. The batteries of ten-inch mortars were particularly destructive, as they were only eight hundred yards from the city. Yet notwithstanding the incessant fire from the city and castle commenced long before that of the Americans, General Scott lost but two men killed and four wounded. One of the killed was Captain John R. Vinton, of the third artillery, who highly distinguished himself at Monterey. He was one of the most talented and accomplished members of the army, and at the time of his fall was on duty in the trenches as field and commanding officer.†

Thirteen heavy pounders now arrived from the depot, and two of them were safely landed; but a heavy *norther* commencing at noon, stopped all further landing of either guns or bombs, and in consequence the mortar batteries were obliged to slacken their fires until the return of a smooth sea. On the night of the 23d, this terrible storm abated, and early the next morning the army commenced the landing of shot, shells, and mortars.

The naval battery, (No. 5,) was opened with great activity by Captain Aulick, the second in command of the squadron. His fire was continued from ten A. M. until two in the afternoon, when he had exhausted his ammunition, and was soon after relieved by Captain Mayo, who landed with fresh supplies. Captain Aulick had four sailors killed and Lieutenant Baldwin slightly wounded. Most of the other batteries fired but languidly during the day, not only from want of shells, but also in consequence of the fury of the

* See Appendix, articles Bombardment and Capitulation.

† "I have just attended his honored remains to a soldier's grave, in full view of the enemy, and within reach of his guns."—*General Scott's Official Report*. See Appendix.

norther, which filled the works with sand, nearly as fast as they could be opened, blinding the laborers and scattering their materials.

Early on the morning of the 25th, all the batteries commenced in tremendous activity, and the devoted city began to crumble beneath their dreadful discharges. But the garrison seemed heedless of their losses, and the huge guns of the San Juan poured forth their fierce showers of hail with incessant roar.

On the evening previous, General Scott had received a memorial signed by the consuls of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Prussia, asking him to grant a truce, to enable the neutrals, together with Mexican women and children, to withdraw from the city. To this General Scott now replied in substance, as follows: That a truce could be granted only on the application of Governor Morales, with a view to surrender; that in sending safeguards to the different consuls, commencing as far back as the 13th instant, he had distinctly admonished them of the dangers that followed; that although at that date he had refused to allow any person to pass the line of investment either way, yet the blockade had been left open to the consuls and other neutrals to pass out to their respective ships of war, up to the 22d instant. Inclosed was a copy of the summons to the governor, showing that General Scott had fully considered the hardships and distresses of the place, especially of the women and children, before one gun had been fired upon the city.

The sufferings of the city were now becoming intense. Men, women and children were torn to pieces by bombs, or crushed beneath falling buildings; hundreds congregated in the streets, were raked and thinned by the shells and shot, and the hospitals were crowded with the wounded and dying. Under these circumstances, the people were clamorous for a termination of their miseries; and numbers of them petitioned the governor to surrender. With a bravery, however, which does him honor, he resolutely refused, declaring his intention to defend his post until defence was hopeless. A council of the citizens and military officers was then held, the result of which was, that Morales was deposed, and General Landero placed in his stead. On the morning of the 26th, the new governor despatched overtures of surrender to the American commander, and negotiations were immediately commenced. Consider-

able delay was experienced, as a storm of wind filled the air with showers of sand, and rendered it difficult to communicate with the city, and utterly impossible to reach the fleet.

Generals Worth and Pillow, and Colonel Totten, were appointed as commissioners by General Scott, to meet those of the Mexican commander. While the conference was going on, Captain Aulick arrived from the fleet, and although not originally included in the specified arrangements, yet the commander did not hesitate to desire the Mexicans, with proper courtesy, that the captain might be duly introduced, and allowed to participate in the acts and discussions of the commissioners. He was accordingly received.

At the conference, the Mexican commissioners offered six propositions as the terms on which they were willing to evacuate the city; these, with the reply of the American commander were as follows.

Six Propositions from the Mexican Commissioners to the General-in-Chief.

1st. The garrison will evacuate the place within a time to be agreed upon between the belligerent parties, retiring to the city of Orizaba or Jalapa, by regular day marches, according to the custom of armies on a march.

2d. The aforesaid garrison shall march out with all the honors of war, colors displayed, drums beating, stores belonging to the corps of which it is composed, the allowance of field pieces corresponding to its force, baggage and munitions of war.

3d. The Mexican flag will remain displayed on the bastion of Santiago until the retiring Mexican garrison shall be out of sight of the city, and on hauling it down, it shall be saluted with twenty-one guns fired from the same bastion, until which time the forces of the United States shall not enter the place.

4th. The inhabitants of Vera Cruz shall continue in the free possession of their moveable and immoveable property, in the enjoyment of which they shall never be disturbed, as well as in the exercise of their religious faith.

5th. The guards of Vera Cruz, if they find it convenient, to retire peaceably to their homes, not to be molested on account of their conduct in bearing arms in defence of the place.

6th. The undersigned desire to know, in case the Senor General

Scott should have to continue hostilities, on account of not admitting these propositions, if he will permit the neutrals to go out of the place, as well as the women and children belonging to the Mexican families.

PEDRO M. HERRERA,
JOSE GUITIERREZ DE VILLANUEVA,
MANUEL ROBLES.

HEAD QUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Camp Washington, before Vera Cruz, March 27, 1847.

The undersigned, Major General Scott, general-in-chief of the armies of the United States of America, has received the report of the commissioners appointed by him, yesterday, to meet the commissioners appointed by his excellency, General Landero, the commander-in-chief of Vera Cruz and the castle of San Juan de Ulloa.

In making that report, the undersigned received, informally, from his commissioners, the *projet* of an arrangement presented to them by the Mexican commissioners, consisting of six articles. Without reproducing those articles *in extenso*, the undersigned will simply refer to them by their respective numbers.

Art. 1. Is wholly inadmissible. The garrisons of the places in question, can only be allowed to march out, or to evacuate them as prisoners of war; but the undersigned is willing that each garrison, without distinction between regular troops and national guards or militia, may retire, in the delay of — days to their respective homes — the officers giving for themselves and their respective men, the usual parole of honor not again to serve against the United States of America in the present war, until duly exchanged.

Art. 2. The garrisons may be allowed all the honors of war usually allowed to gallant troops; but to surrender their arms of every sort, save the side arms of the officers.

Art. 3. As far as practicable by the commissioners of the two armies, this may be arranged to satisfy the just pride of the gallant defenders of the places in question.

Art. 4. Is readily agreed to, and may be solemnly promised.

Art. 5. This is substantially met in the above remark under article one.

Art. 6. Not admissible in any case.

Taking the foregoing remarks and the instructions of the undersigned to his commissioners—which instructions were substantially communicated to the Mexican commissioners—as the basis of an honorable capitulation, the undersigned, to spare the further effusion of blood, is willing to refer back the whole subject to the same commissioners of the two parties, provided that the said commissioners meet again to day at ten o'clock, A. M., at the same place as yesterday, and proceed without delay to a definite conclusion of the whole subject.

The undersigned will wait the answer of his excellency, General Landero, up to nine o'clock this day, and, in the mean time renews the assurances of his high respect and consideration.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

The terms upon which the city surrendered are as follows :

1. The whole garrison or garrisons, to be surrendered to the arms of the United States, as prisoners of war, the 29th instant, at ten o'clock, A. M. ; the garrison to be permitted to march out with all the honors of war, and to lay down their arms to such officers as may be appointed by the general-in-chief of the United States armies, and at a point to be agreed upon by the commissioners.

2. Mexican officers shall preserve their arms and private effects including horses and horse furniture, and to be allowed, regular and irregular, as also the rank and file, five days to retire to their respective homes on parole, as hereinafter described.

3. Coincident with the surrender, as stipulated in article 1, the Mexican flags of the various forts and stations shall be struck, saluted by their own batteries ; and immediately thereafter, Forts Santiago and Conception, and the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, occupied by the forces of the United States.

4. The rank and file of the regular portion of the prisoners to be disposed of after surrender and parole, as their general-in-chief may desire, and the irregular to be permitted to return to their homes. The officers in respect to all arms and description of force, giving the usual parole, that the said rank and file, as well as themselves, shall not serve again until duly exchanged.

5. All the *material* of war, and all public property of every description found in the city, the castle of San Juan de Ulloa and their



Winfield Scott.

dependencies, to belong to the United States ; but the armament of the same (not injured or destroyed in the further prosecution of the actual war) may be considered as liable to be restored to Mexico by a definite treaty of peace.

6. The sick and wounded Mexicans to be allowed to remain in the city with such medical officers and attendants and officers of the army as may be necessary to their care and treatment.

7 Absolute protection is solemnly guaranteed to persons in the city, and to property ; and it is clearly understood that no private building or property is to be taken or used by the forces of the United States, without previous arrangement with the owners, and for a fair equivalent.

8. Absolute freedom of religious worship and ceremonies, is solemnly guaranteed.

The following incidents connected with this brilliant national triumph, we collect from letters of various gentlemen, all eye witnesses to the facts which they relate, and all sharers in their dangers and glories.

“ On the morning of the 11th, the column of General Twiggs moved up with the mounted rifles in advance, to take position on the left of the line. The undertaking was a most arduous one, but with General Twiggs there is no such word as fail. When his cannon could not be hauled by horses, they were pulled and lifted by his men, and they were taken up and over sand ridges that I should think it utterly impossible, and beyond the physical strength of men to surmount. The advance of this column arrived at their destination on the sea shore, above the town about two o'clock, and the rear closed up at sundown.

The place is now entirely circumscribed, the entire investing line occupying a space of eight miles in length. As the troops lay stretched along the hills and valleys, with the stars and stripes dotted here and there, fluttering in the breeze, they present to the view a majestic and sublime appearance. The enemy are now completely within our grasp. General Worth occupies the right, General Twiggs the left, and General Patterson the centre.”

“ At 4 o'clock P. M. of the 22d, the American battery consisting of seven mortars, commenced the bombardment of the city.

The shells fell into the place after the first fires, and exploded with as much precision as could be desired. The city from one end to the other soon became enveloped in a cloud of smoke—the vivid and lurid flashes of the artillery, from their city batteries, breaking through it at brief intervals, and report after report followed each other in quick succession until after the dusk of evening. The shell and round shot fell heavy and fast at the intrenchments behind which our batteries were planted.

As soon as Commodore Perry perceived that the land forces were engaged, he ordered Captain Tatnall to attack with the “Mosquito Fleet.” The captain inquired at what point he should engage. Perry emphatically replied—“Wherever you can do the most execution, sir.” Accordingly the little fleet took position under a point of land known as the Limekiln, about a mile from the city, and under protection from the point blank shot of the castle. They soon opened their fire, and were answered by the castle, so that in a little while the powerful engines of destruction were in full blast, hurling their dreadful missiles into the opposite ranks, in rapid succession; this continued until dark. At 8 o’clock the party in the trenches were relieved. They were literally covered with smoke and dust, and so much disfigured that they could not be recognized except by their voices. Shell after shell exploded in their midst, and shot after shot threw barrels of earth from the embankments, over their heads as they lay in the trenches. Their escape was almost miraculous.

Before daylight of the 23d, Captain Tatnall weighed anchor, and aided by the clouds which obscured the moon, he approached within six hundred yards of the castle. Here he engaged with the fortress, and sustained himself for half an hour, when a signal from the Commodore, obliged him to return. This attack is considered one of the most daring feats, perpetrated before the castle.”*

* The same writer continues, “During the early part of last evening the town was lighted up by a building which was set on fire by the bomb-shells. As soon as the fire was discovered from our mortar battery, I was very much gratified to observe the cessation of our fire; for notwithstanding we were endeavoring to destroy their town, or compel them to surrender it with their strong holds and fortifications, still humanity would seem to require that a temporary cessation of hostilities should take place under such circumstances. War is terrible in its most modified form; but the besieging of a city like Vera Cruz, when we know that we are battering down the houses over some fellow creatures’

The "norther" is thus described by the same pen.

"Early on the morning of the 26th, it sprung up very suddenly, and blew most furiously all day. There was a general commotion by sea and land. The rifted clouds flew like sable-winged messengers of death, through the air; while the lashed ocean, furiously piled her crested waves far along the beach. The clouds of sand swept like hail across the strand, from hill top to the valley's depth, and like the sirocco of the Sahara, filled the air with darkness, and man and beast with feelings of dismay. The mariner was tempest tost, by the quick surges of the angry deep, and fear might well blanch the cheek of the boldest. The soldier cowered low to escape the drifting sand, which, in almost impalpable particles, penetrated even the smallest apertures. Tents were lifted from their positions, and in many instances literally torn into ribands, while clothing and camp equipage were strewn in confusion for miles around."

The particulars of Colonel Harney's "dragoon fight" are as follows:—

"Information was received in camp this morning that a body of Mexicans were hanging on our rear, intending to force the lines if possible, and make their way into the city with a number of cattle. Colonel Harney, with one hundred and twenty dragoons, was ordered out in search of them, and ordered to report his observations. He discovered them, about two thousand in number, intrenched at a bridge, and supported by two pieces of artillery, three miles from General Patterson's head-quarters. Colonel Harney started on his return, intending to prepare properly and attack them the next morning. But the gallant old soldier knowing that delays are dangerous, could not bear the idea of leaving the enemy after having come in sight of them, without having a brush. Accordingly, he returned to the place, took a position where he could watch their movements, and keep his men secure from the enemy's fire. The Mexicans commenced firing at him, and threw a perfect shower of balls all around him, but without injury. Colonel Harney then despatched a messenger to camp for a heads, but cannot tell whether we are destroying soldiers, or women and children * * * * * together with the sight of blazing houses, lighting up the church spires and domes of the prominent buildings, with the families moving about on the tops of the houses in the utmost consternation, and even despair, cannot do otherwise than excite a feeling of commiseration."

small reinforcement and some artillery to break the breastworks. He was reinforced from General Patterson's division, by Lieutenant Judd, with two pieces of artillery, about sixty dragoons, dismounted, and six companies of the first and second Tennessee Volunteers, under the command of Colonel Haskell, accompanied by General Patterson in person, although he did not take the command from Colonel Harney, but merely participated as any other individual who was engaged.

Colonel Harney then formed the Tennesseans on the right, his dragoons on the left, and advanced slowly, to draw the fire of the Mexicans, until Lieutenant Judd got his artillery in such a position as he desired. The movement succeeded admirably: Lieutenant Judd got his ground within one hundred and fifty yards of the Mexicans, and commenced firing—they attempted to return it, but as soon as a slight breach was made in the parapet, Colonel Harney ordered a charge, which was answered by a yell from the dragoons and Tennesseans. Colonel Haskell, Captain Cheatham and Captain Foster were the first men to leap over the breastwork, and, as a naval officer remarked, who witnessed the whole affair, the balance went over so much "like a thousand of brick," that there was no telling who was first or last. As might have been expected, the Mexicans were unable to stand a charge from "the boys who stood the fire of the Black Fort at Monterey." A few of the incumbrances were soon thrown out of the way, and Colonel Harney with his dragoons, leaped the breastwork and gave chase.

He had not proceeded more than a mile before he found the enemy formed in line to receive him. He immediately deployed, and from the head of the line ordered a charge. When he approached within about twenty yards of the enemy's line they gave him a fire from their side arms, but overshot. Then came the test of strength and skill—the dragoon with sword in hand, met the confiding lancer, with pointed lance, ready to receive him. The contest was but for a short time. In many instances, lances were twisted from their clenched hold; the Mexicans were unsaddled and driven helter-skelter in every direction, and pursued by the dragoons in detachments.

Colonel Harney and several of his officers met their men in single combat, but none of them received any injury except Lieutenant

Neill, adjutant of the regiment, who was wounded severely in two places from his magnanimity in attempting to capture a Mexican instead of killing him. In full run he overtook the retreating Mexican, and placing his sword in front of him, commanded him to surrender, whereupon the Mexican drove his lance into his magnanimous adversary. As the lieutenant wheeled his horse to despatch him, another Mexican charged up and struck him with a lance. However, severely wounded as he was, in two places, he conquered one of his foes, and a corporal came up in time to settle accounts with the other.

In this affair Colonel Harney had four wounded and one killed. Lieutenant Judd had one killed; and the Tennesseans had Messrs. Fox, Long, Woody, and one other of Captain McCown's company, whose name I could not ascertain, wounded. Mr. Young, a Texan Ranger, who was acting as guide, was also wounded slightly. Nineteen Mexicans were found dead at the bridge behind the breastwork. Colonel Harney killed fifty and wounded about the same number. The Mexican force was near 2000; Colonel Harney's about 500.

Colonel Haskell, Captains Cheatans, Foster, Snead, Lieutenant Judd and all the officers and men in the command are spoken of in the very highest terms by Colonel Harney, for their gallant conduct throughout the whole affair.

General Twiggs was appointed governor of the city of Vera Cruz and castle of San Juan de Ulloa, and under his energetic government, order and tranquillity were soon established. General Scott used every means in his power to conciliate the inhabitants, and inspire them with friendly feelings toward the Americans. After the capitulation he requested a personal interview with those of the garrison, who had distinguished themselves in the defence, and after complimenting them highly for their bravery, he dismissed them without parole. With the same object in view, he issued the following proclamation.

MAJOR-GENERAL SCOTT, *General-in-chief of the armies of the United States of America, to the good people of Mexico.*

"*Mexicans!*—At the head of a powerful army soon to be doubled, a part of which is advancing upon your capital—and with another army with Major-General Taylor, in march from Saltillo toward San Luis Potosi—I think myself called upon to address you.

Mexicans!—Americans are not your enemies, but the enemies for a time, of those men who, a year ago misgoverned you, and brought about this unnatural war between two great republics. We are the friends of the peaceful inhabitants of the country we occupy, and the friends of your holy religion, its hierarchy and its priesthood. The same church is found in all parts of our own country, crowded with devout Catholics, and respected by our government, laws and people.

For the church of Mexico, the unoffending inhabitants of the country, and their property, I have from the first done everything in my power to place them under the safeguard of *martial law*, against the few bad men in this army.

My orders, to that effect, known to all, are precise and rigorous. Under them several Americans have already been punished by fine, for the benefit of Mexicans, besides imprisonment, and one for a rape, has been hung by the neck.

Is this not a proof of good faith and energetic discipline? Other proofs shall be given as often as injuries to Mexicans may be detected.

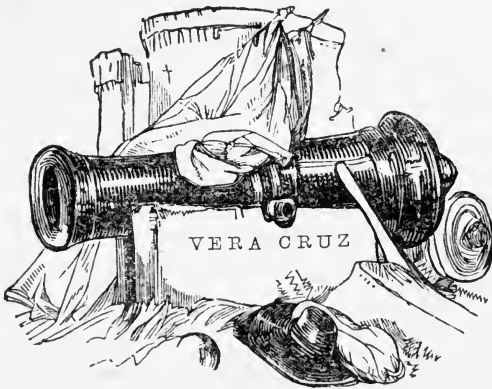
On the other hand, injuries committed by individuals or parties of Mexico not belonging to the public forces, upon individuals, small parties, trains of wagons and teams, or of pack mules, or any other persons or property belonging to this army, contrary to the laws of war, shall be punished with rigor; or if the particular offenders be not delivered up to the Mexican authorities, the punishment shall fall upon entire cities, towns or neighborhoods.

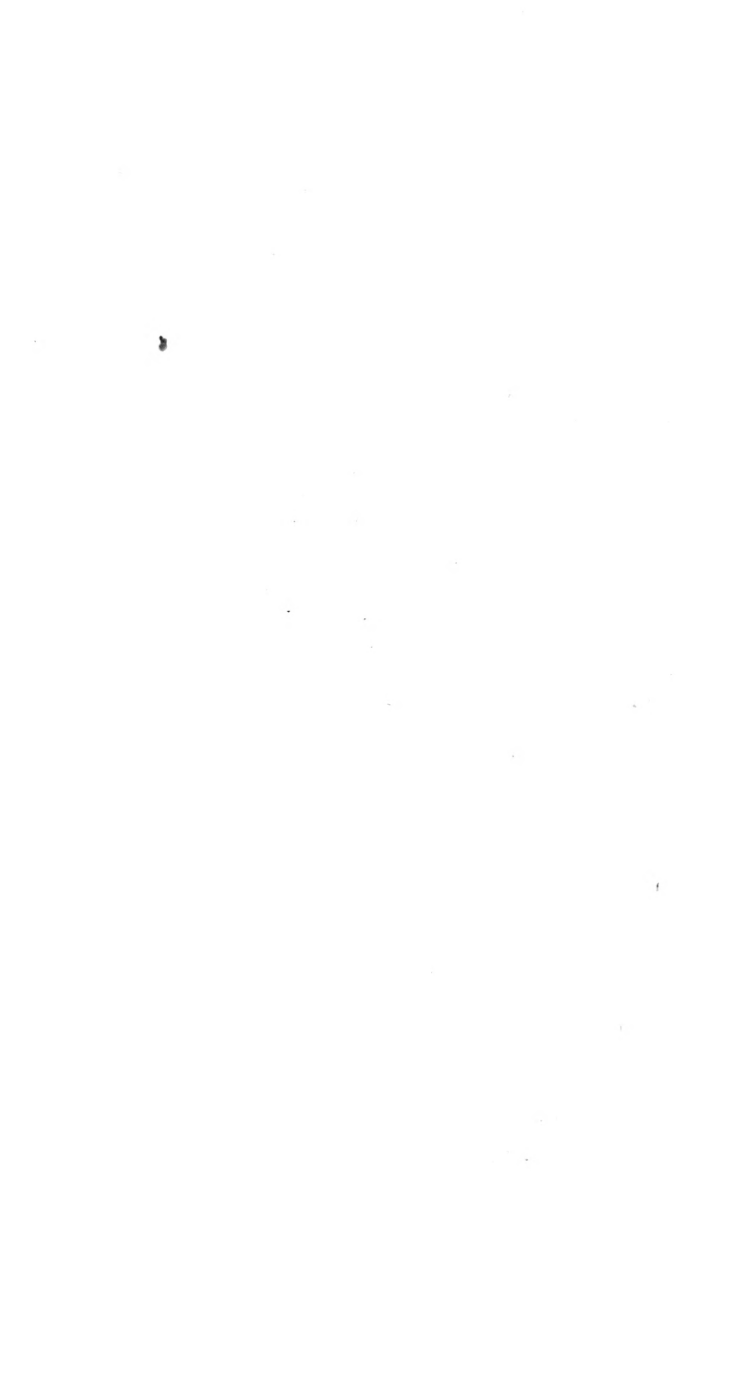
Let, then, all good Mexicans remain at home, or at their peaceful occupation; but they are invited to bring in for sale, horses, mules, beef, cattle, corn, barley, wheat, flour for bread, and vegetables; cash will be paid for every thing this army may take or purchase, and protection will be given to all sellers. The Americans are strong enough to offer these assurances, which should Mexicans wisely accept, this war may soon be happily ended, to the honor and advantage of both belligerents. Then the Americans having converted enemies into friends, will be happy to take leave of Mexico and return to their own country."

After the capitulation every thing remained quiet in the city, until the commencement of June, when the movements of Santa Anna,

seemed to indicate an intended attack upon it. The designs of the dictator were however unknown, but it was more probable that he would direct his attention more to the defence of the capital, than to an assault on an impregnable city.

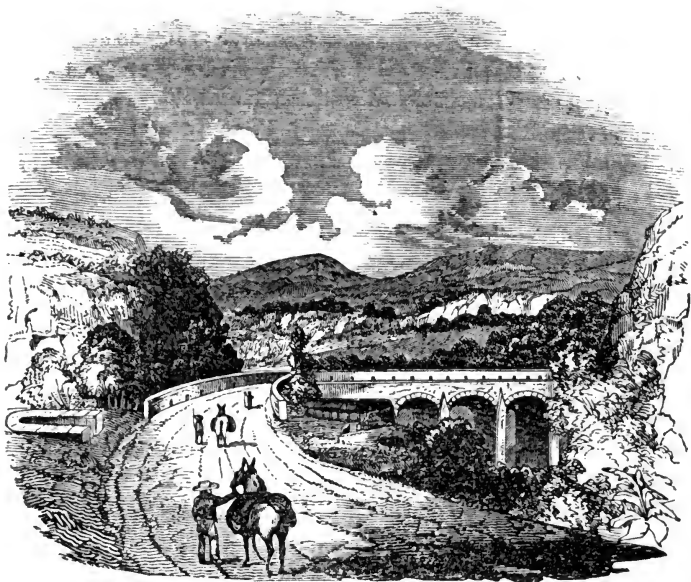
On the 21st of March a detachment of Commodore Perry's fleet, under Captain Hunter, appeared before the town of Alvarado, and demanded its surrender. Notwithstanding the many advantages of the garrison, the demand was complied with, and the town capitulated without firing a gun. The lieutenant was subsequently called to account, and censured for having exceeded his authority and disobeyed orders in this affair. His punishment was a dismissal from the squadron, then actively engaged before the enemy.







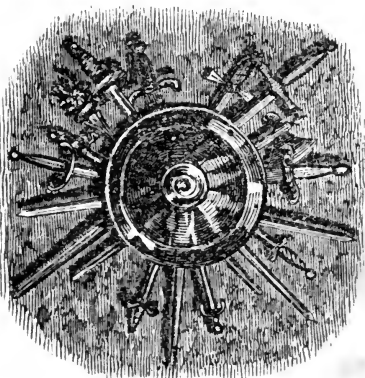
La Nación



National Bridge.

CHAPTER XIV.

Battle of Sierra Gordo.



ON the 8th of April the American army left Vera Cruz, and marched for the interior. On the 17th they encountered the Mexicans at Sierra Gordo, a strong mountain pass situated on the main road to the capital, between Vera Cruz and Jalapa. It had been strongly fortified, and was occupied by more than

20,000 troops under Santa Anna. The position completely com-

mands a defile through which a carriage road is cut, as well as the heights in the neighbourhood. This circumstance rendered it an excellent military position from which to impede the progress of an enemy, attempting to penetrate to the capital.

On the principal hill, which is called the *Telegrapho*, the Mexicans constructed a parapet commanding the front and sides, thus opening upon the principal roads and forming the centre of their camp. The carriage road situated to the right of the *Cerro del Telegrapho*, and following a curve formed by the base of it, was cut at a point where the defile was deepest. Behind this at a short distance was constructed a parapet, which followed a direction almost parallel with the road, and completely commanding it. This was constructed solely for the infantry, and as a position for the battery of the glacis. On the right of the carriage road, is a road leading from this battery to three heights, about a mile from the *Cerro del Telegrapho*. This was fortified to impede the passage by the old road leading from the *Plan del Rio*, and for the purpose of attacking by the left, the carriage road. These three heights were manned by the Mexicans, the advanced lines of the left, centre and right; and in addition to them, a reserve was posted in a defile through which the road passes, half a mile west of the battery of the glacis, the *tierra caliente* or low level, terminates at the *Plan del Rio*, the site of the American camp. From this place the road ascends in a long circuit among lofty hills, whose commanding points had all been fortified and garrisoned by the enemy. Thus the intrenchments of the Mexican right rested on a precipice that overhung an impassable ravine, forming the bed of the *Rio Frio* or *Cold river*, and extended continuously to the road, on which was placed a formidable battery. On the opposite side was the lofty and difficult height of *Sierra Gordo*, commanding the approaches in all directions. The main body of the Mexican army was encamped on level ground, with a battery of five pieces, half a mile on the height toward Jalapa.

After examining these difficulties, General Scott resolved to push daily reconnoissances towards the enemy's position, in order to open a route to debouch on the Jalapa road, while the main army attacked the enemy's left and rear. This was an arduous undertaking. The road had to be made along difficult slopes, over deep chasms, and

jutting precipices. It was begun by Lieutenant Beauregard, and continued by Captain Lee of the engineers, who advanced undiscovered to the Mexican lines, when further reconnoissance became impossible, without an action. The Jalapa road, the destined point of debouchure was not therefore gained, though believed to be near. It was now evident that to reach that point, and cut off the expected retreat, the army must storm Sierra Gordo.

The dispositions for the attack were promptly made by the American commander. On the 17th, General Twiggs's division, reinforced by that of General Shields, was thrown into position, and attacked by the Mexicans while taking up the ground to bivouac with the opposing height for the heavy battery. The action was begun by a company of seventh infantry, under brevet Lieutenant Gardiner, and continued with spirit and effect for some time. The Mexicans fought with fury, and many officers and men of the Americans were killed and wounded. While the fire was hottest, Colonel Harney, suddenly poured into action, with his column of riflemen; and before his galling fire the Mexicans fled on every side. The height was immediately occupied, and during the night a battery of one twenty-four pounder was placed upon it, together with two twenty-four pound howitzers, the whole under the superintendence of Captain Lee and Lieutenant Hagner. Next morning the guns were opened and served with effect by Captain Steptoe and Lieutenant Brown of the third artillery, and Lieutenants Hagner and Seymore, first artillery.

The same night, with extreme toil and difficulty, an eight inch howitzer was put in position across the river, opposite the enemy's right battery. Major Burham of New York, with four volunteer companies, performed this creditable service, the whole being superintended by Lieutenants Tower and Laidly.

Early on the morning of the 18th. the American columns moved to the general attack. Pillow's brigade assaulted the right of the intrenchments, but was obliged to retire. General Twiggs's division, was ordered to storm the strongest position of the enemy—that of Sierra Gordo; and on the result of this assault, the fate of the battle hung. The troops advanced steadily and rapidly, amid a tremendous fire, pierced the centre, gained command of all the intrenchments



Battle of Sierra Gordo

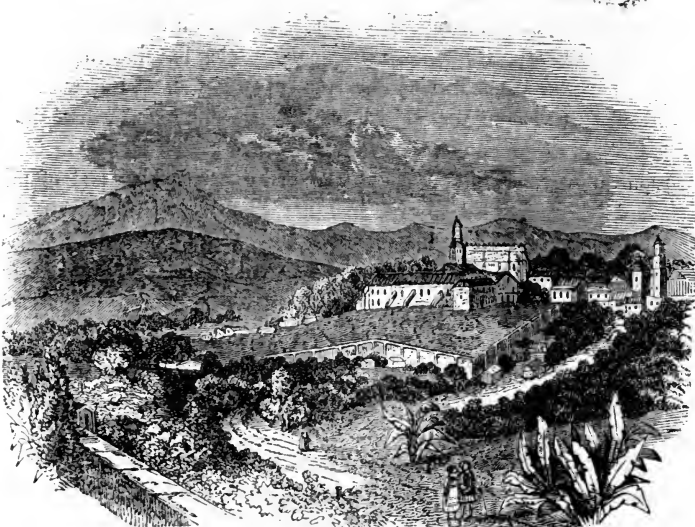
and cut them off from support. Colonel Riley's brigade of infantry now pushed on against the main body of the enemy, and the guns of their own fort were soon turned to play on that portion under the immediate command of Santa Anna. Meanwhile General Shields assaulted the left, and carried the rear battery of five guns, situated on the Jalapa road, thus completing the rout of the enemy.

When the fate of the battle was decided, the cavalry, attended by the batteries of Wall and Taylor, were pushed on towards Jalapa. The pursuit was hot, and many of the Mexicans were killed or wounded.

This victory was decisive, the Mexican army being utterly disorganized. Its immediate consequences were, the possession of Jalapa, the abandonment of La Haya, a most important pass between Vera Cruz and the capital, and the prompt occupation by Worth's division of the fortress of Perote, with its extensive armament of sixty-six guns, and mortars, together with a large quantity of other supplies.

The whole American force present at Sierra Gordo was 8,500 men; their loss was 33 officers, and 398 men—in all 431, of whom 63 were killed. The force of the enemy was estimated at 12,000, and the loss at 1000 or 1200.

On the same day that the Americans gained the victory of Sierra Gordo, the town of Tuspan was captured after a slight resistance, by a portion of the Gulf squadron, under Commodore Perry; and on the following day the city of Jalapa was taken without opposition by General Twiggs.



Jalapa.

From this place General Scott issued a second proclamation to the Mexican nation, similar in tone to his previous one, and with

an additional argument for the Mexicans' attention, drawn from the results of Sierra Gordo. It was issued on the 11th of May, and reached the city of Mexico on the 19th. Although severely denounced in most of the journals, as an attempt at prevarication and Mexican dishonor, it is said to have been productive of considerable effect among the intelligent portion of the population; and indeed the style and scope of it are such as are likely to prove acceptable to the nation at large.

On the 15th, a portion of the American army, under General Worth, approached Puebla, in which Santa Anna was busily occupied in obtaining provisions and other necessities for his army. On arriving at the plain of Amasoca, they were met by a body of fifteen hundred lancers, and a skirmish ensued, in which three of the enemy were killed, and seven wounded. They then broke and were hotly pursued by the Americans, who entered the city without opposition.

At the retreat of the cavalry Santa Anna left Puebla in haste, and proceeded toward the capital, which he entered on the 19th. Here, according to report, his reception was any thing but flattering. The rabble were exasperated by the late heavy losses, and now determined on revenging themselves on the man who had deceived their fond hopes, and shown himself incapable of defending them. The report however of his being stoned and openly cursed, and of the guard being doubled to save his life, is probably an exaggeration. This is proven by the fact that in a few days he was able to raise another large army, with which he proceeded toward the *del Rio* Pass, and commenced fortifications, with a view to oppose the progress of General Scott. Accounts of the movements and disposition of his army, render it highly probable that we shall soon receive intelligence of another Sierra Gordo affair between the two commanders.

Recent news has brought the important intelligence that General Cadwallader, of the Pennsylvania regiment, has had a battle with a body of Mexican cavalry, and defeated them. We give the particulars as received by the mail, together with other interesting movements of portions of the army.

On the 8th of July, a small reconnoitering party, together with

some citizens and disbanded soldiers, in number about one hundred and fifty, with seventy-five armed men and thirty mounted, left Puebla for Vera Cruz. This party was under command of Captain Bainbridge, of third artillery. On leaving Jalapa and getting near Sierra Gordo, this party was informed that it would not be prudent to go through the pass, as there were four thousand Mexicans in the chaparral along the pass. Previous to this the officers who had gone to the rear of the train, were fired at from the chapparal, at the mouth of the pass.

The party was organized and marched through without meeting an enemy, and arrived at the bridge that evening. While they were bivouacking on the other side of the bridge, being so fatigued that they were unable to furnish a guard, they were informed that some persons were barricading the bridge. A guard was then stationed below the bridge and the encampment, to prevent the party being surprised.

At this time, signal lights on the ridges and cliffs were distinctly seen. Before daylight the scouting party were sent out, and also a party to clear the bridge, which was done without any opposition.

The main body of the party then passed over the bridge. Every thing then appeared to be safe; and all danger being passed, Lieutenant McWilliams and Mr. Frazer were sent back to bring on the train on the other side of the bridge. As they were entering the bridge a party of about twenty-five Mexicans appeared on the bridge, and fired several volleys on them. The wagon master and four others, who were passing the bridge, were fired on, and the whole five were killed, and the wagon captured. It was of no great value.

After the fire had ceased, a party of lancers appeared on the bridge, and seemed to be prepared to charge, but seeing that Captain Bainbridge's party were preparing to receive them, they wheeled their horses and galloped off. Bainbridge pursued his march in good order, followed by four hundred or five hundred foot lancers, who hung upon his rear and flanks for four or five miles, but at a respectful distance. Thus hemmed in, this little party pursued its way

until it arrived where Colonel McIntosh had encamped with his train.

The Mexicans who had attacked Bainbridge's party, were the same who had compelled Colonel McIntosh to halt and wait reinforcements. The party remained that night in McIntosh's camp, and during the whole time the Mexicans kept a continual fire on the camp, approaching with the greatest boldness to very near our sentinels.

On the next day Captain Bainbridge's party resumed its march to Vera Cruz, being joined by Captain Duperus's United States dragoons, who were sent back to their horses. This company, with its gallant captain, behaved very handsomely at the attack on McIntosh's camp; indeed it was generally admitted that Colonel McIntosh's command was saved by the gallantry of Duperus's party.

Captain Bainbridge's party continued their march to Vera Cruz, where they arrived in safety.

In the mean time, Duperus's party having a long return train to guard, and being threatened by a large party of lancers, halted at Santa Fe, where they were charged by a greatly superior force, which they gallantly repulsed, killing many of the enemy and suffering no loss themselves. It was said, however, that some of our wagons were cut off and the drivers were taken prisoners. Captain Duperus arrived safely in Vera Cruz, having lost three men killed, and three wounded.

On the day Captain Bainbridge's party left McIntosh's camp, General Cadwallader had arrived with a force of eight hundred men and two howitzers, under command, and pushed on towards the National Bridge. On approaching the bridge, General Cadwallader occupied the heights commanding the bridge, from which the enemy had fired on Captain Bainbridge's party, where he was attacked by a large force of the Mexicans, posted on the ridges and in the chapparal, and some hard fighting was carried on for several hours, the Mexicans losing over one hundred men, and General Cadwallader losing some fifteen killed, and some thirty or forty wounded: the Mexicans were repulsed.

The bridge was successfully passed by General Cadwallader, who was on his way to Jalapa.

The estimated loss of Colonel McIntosh's party was about four thousand dollars. The road for miles was strewn with empty boxes and bacon sides, which had been captured by the enemy.

There was a great deal of dissatisfaction in the army respecting the command which had charge of the train. There will be a court of inquiry into the subject.

The garrison of Jalapa has been broken up by order of General Scott, and all the sick and government stores have been sent to Perote Castle, so that this line of communication is entirely closed. General Scott has had a road opened from Perote to Tlaxpan, from which, in future all our stores and men will be sent.

The success of the attack on McIntosh's command has given great confidence to the guerillas, who are swarming in great numbers through the country, and attacking all our parties large and small.

It was chiefly owing to the gallantry of Captain Bennett, the paymaster, that the specie wagons in charge of the party were saved. He was in one of them himself when the wagon was attacked, and fought like a tiger.

There are about one thousand men encamped at Vera Cruz. General Shields was at Jalapa, and was about to leave for the United States, when he received an order from General Scott to join him at Puebla.

There are no preparations to defend any point between Puebla and the capital; all the odds and ends of this army are collected in the city, about twenty thousand in number, but poorly armed, and are miserably provided for.

There was a small *pronunciamento* at the city of Mexico. It was early put down by General Bustamente. It was got up by factions of the populace party, and Gomez Farias party. Their cry was "Down with Santa Anna," but the president *ad interim* still maintains his power and influence.

Congress had refused to accept his resignation.

We have about six thousand men at Puebla, under command of Worth and Quitman. General Scott will remain at Puebla until he is reinforced.

General Bravo is in command of the army at the capital.

Since the above was written, we have learned that in the affair between General Cadwalader and the Mexicans at the National Bridge, the company of Lieutenant Blakely, of the newly-raised volunteers, with two howitzers, charged the barricades and swept them with a few discharges from the howitzers.

In passing through, however, Lieutenant Blakely received a heavy fire from the enemy on the ridge which commands the road, by which he sustained a loss of one killed, and four wounded, the lieutenant himself being wounded in the leg. They also lost several horses. The heights were then charged on the right and left of the road and gallantly carried, the enemy flying before them in great confusion.

When General Cadwalader had passed the bridge, he was attacked by a large party of guerillas, who kept up a continual fire on his men for a long distance.

At Sierra Gordo, it was thought from reports of heavy firing that the enemy had made a stand in great numbers, though no apprehensions were entertained for the safety of General Cadwalader's command, who was moving in a bold and steady manner—the only way to deal with the Mexicans.

Captain Gates's company of third dragoons was sent by General Cadwalader to the rear, to reinforce the guards of the train, who were attacked by a large force of lancers, which they repulsed with considerable loss.

There is much sickness in Vera Cruz, but very little in the castle.

General Cadwalader is much praised for the energy and promptness of his movements to the rescue of Colonel McIntosh, and for the bravery and skill with which he scattered the swarms of guerillas, grown confident by the success of their previous enterprises.

General Scott was at Puebla at the last accounts. The editors of *El Arcoiris* had received dates from the capital up to the 2d of June.

Santa Anna had a second time sent in his resignation of the presidency. Congress had not, up to that time, accepted it. He had also made a formal resignation of his office as commander-in-chief of the

army, which, like his resignation of the presidency, remained in abeyance.

Five Mexican generals, whose names are not given, have been arrested, and sent to the different states for confinement.

The gallant Captain Walker has commenced his work of retaliation on the guerillas. On the morning of the 8th instant, he started with his command from Perote, on an expedition some distance into the interior. During the expedition he succeeded in capturing nine guerillas and an alcalde. He has employed them in clearing the streets and sinks.

A letter had been received in Vera Cruz on the 15th instant, previous to the sailing of the Galveston, direct from the head-quarters of General Scott, stating that General Scott had issued orders for the removal of the prisoners from Vera Cruz to Tuspan. This change was said to be partly owing to the sickness in Vera Cruz, and because communications could be more easily kept up between Tuspan and Puebla, than between the latter place and Vera Cruz.

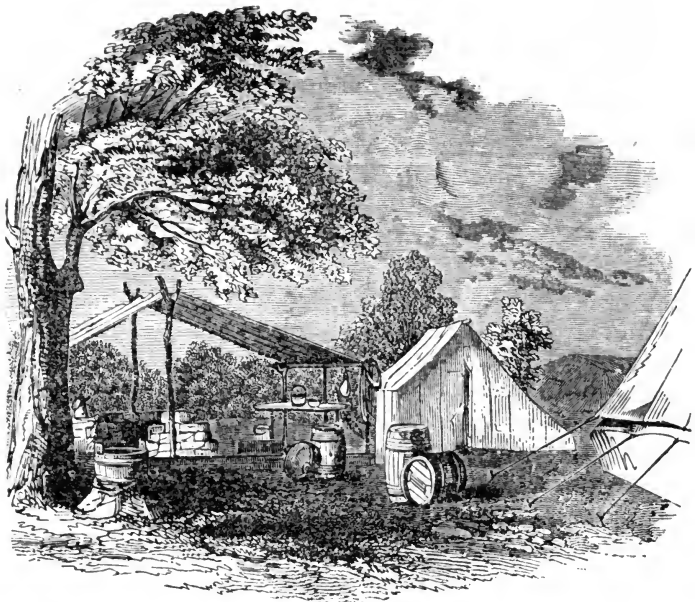
The same mail informs us that Generals Scott and Worth, with the main body of the army, had advanced as far as Rio Frio, without opposition, when they were met by a deputation from the capital, bearing propositions of peace. The exact tenor of these propositions is not known; but they were of such a nature, that General Scott refused to accept them, and determined to push on his forces for the capital. General Herrera is understood to have been elected president, and from the deep anxiety felt by the new government to stay the approach of the Americans, it is thought that further concessions would be made to General Scott before he took up his line of march from Rio Frio.

Such are the principal occurrences in the Mexican war up to the present time. The languor which has characterized the operations of the last month, will probably soon be broken, either by the news of peace or of another severe engagement. All the active operations, are confined to General Scott, as Taylor is now cramped by want troops, and of the necessary supplies for his small army.

At the present time (August 1847,) it appears by the most recent dates from Mexico, that the government of that country have appointed or are about to appoint commissioners to negotiate a treaty

of peace. 'This demonstration may be the result of a sincere desire for peace, or of a determination to gain time, by an apparent willingness to grant what our government evidently desires. Insincerity, treachery and bad faith have marked the conduct of the Mexicans throughout the war ; and every fact, connected with the contest, goes to prove that it is in vain to parley with them. In negotiation they have recourse to such deceit, that we are no match for them ; but in the field they are no match for us. Whenever a peace is concluded we shall obtain from them whatever we are able to gain by a demonstration of unquestionable power ; strong and decisive measures are the only ones which can bring the Mexicans to a sense of their true position, and make them yield to the demands of justice. So long as they can amuse us, and delay active operations by delusive negotiations about peace, the war will be protracted ; but when it is perceived by them that further disasters cannot be arrested but by submission, then peace will ensue.





General Taylor's Kitchen.

CHAPTER XV.

Conclusion.



CENERAL TAYLOR has remained during the last few months, for the most part at his head-quarters near Monterey, awaiting reinforcements, necessary to enable him to advance on San Luis Potosi. This must be sufficiently trying to a commander of so active a disposition, at a moment when the state of the war calls for active measures. But this is

not the only trial to which his patience has been recently subjected.

General Villamil, the Mexican commander at San Luis Potosi, addressed to him in the month of May, a letter of a peculiarly insulting character, the tenor of which will appear by the answer of General Taylor, which we give below. This answer is highly characteristic of the general, evincing at once his firmness and moderation, together with that high bred courtesy, which even under the most exasperating circumstances ever marks the true gentleman.

The answer of General Taylor to General Villamil is as follows :

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR MONTEREY, *May 19th, 1847.*

SIR—I received yesterday your communication of the 20th instant, which informs me that you are instructed by the President substitute of the republic to address me, with a view to demand from me a categorical reply—"whether my wishes and my instructions are to prosecute the war in conformity to the laws of nations and as war is conducted by civilized countries, or as barbarous tribes carry it on among themselves, it being understood that Mexico is disposed and resolved to accept the manner which is proposed or carried out, and awaits the result in order to dictate its measures accordingly."

If these instructions were not communicated to me through an authority as highly respectable as yourself, I should refuse to believe they emanated from the chief magistrate of the republic, containing, as in fact they do contain, in my judgment, an implied but not less deliberate insult towards me and towards the government which I have the honor to represent. Viewing them in this light, I shall decline giving the categorical reply which is demanded of me, which I do with the respect due to his excellency the president.

As you have thought fit to communicate to me the instructions of your government at some length upon the manner in which the war has been carried on upon my part, I improve this opportunity to make some remarks upon the subject.

The outrages to which especial reference is made, came to my knowledge after they had been perpetrated, and I can assure you that neither yourself nor the President of the republic can have felt deeper pain, than that which I felt on the occasion. All the means at my disposal within the limits of our laws were employed, but in the greater number of cases fruitlessly, to identify and punish the

delinquents. I cannot suppose that you have been so ill-informed, as to believe such atrocities were committed by my connivance, order, or consent, or that they by themselves give an idea of the manner in which the war has been prosecuted in this part of Mexico. They were in truth unfortunate exceptions, caused by circumstances which I could not control.

It appears to me in point to inform you, that from the moment the American army set foot upon the territory of Mexico, it has suffered individually, the loss of officers and soldiers who have been assassinated by Mexicans, sometimes almost in sight of their own camp. An outrage of this character preceded the melancholy affair of Catana. I do not mention these truths with the view of justifying in any manner, the practice of retaliation, because my government is sufficiently civilized to make a distinction between the lawless acts of individuals, and the general policy which governs the operations of an enemy ; but you have endeavored to make a comparison between our respective governments in regard to the manner in which they conduct the war, which I cannot pass without remark. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the Mexican troops have given to the world the example of killing the wounded upon the field of battle.

As you have adverted to the requisition which I have made upon the people of these states to make indemnity for the losses incurred by the destruction of one of our trains, I take the liberty of informing you that this was not the act of the Mexican troops exclusively, but that the rancheros of the country were chiefly concerned in it ; and that the subsequent assassination and mutilation of the unarmed teamsters were marked by an atrocious barbarity unequalled in the present war.

It is with pain that I find myself under the necessity of addressing you in a manner to which I am little accustomed ; but I have been provoked to do so by the object and the manner of your communication, which is objectionable, in my estimation, as well in its insinuations as in its tone. With respect to the implied threat of retaliation, I beg you to understand that I hold it at its true worth, and that I am at all times prepared to act accordingly, whatever may

be the policy or mode of carrying on the war which the Mexican government or its generals may think it proper to adopt.

I am, sir, with much respect, your obedient servant.

During the recent period of inaction, General Taylor has been frequently addressed by individuals and committees, in reference to his position as an acknowledged candidate for the office of President of the United States. His answers to these communications are always dignified and patriotic, evincing that with him duty is a primary, and office a secondary consideration. If he should ever be raised to this elevated situation, it is very evident that he will stamp upon the government his own character of energy, firmness and decision. No party or clique will ever direct his movements, or divert the straight line of his manly policy.

In person General Taylor is described as being about five feet eight inches high, inclined to corpulency and a little round shouldered. His weight comes up to the standard of the old revolutionary generals, most of whom exceeded two hundred pounds. His legs are remarkably short, so that while sitting on horseback, he appears much taller than he really is. He has a high forehead, a laughing but penetrating eye, and a striking expression of firmness about the mouth. His hair is nearly white, and the expression of his countenance is strongly indicative of the humanity and benevolence which so signally mark his character. His habits are remarkably plain, and his style of living, simple in the extreme.* He hardly ever appears in full dress, preferring a linen roundabout, cotton pantaloons, a straw hat in warm weather. In rainy or cold weather, he appears in that famous

* The following description of General Taylor's kitchen, of which we have placed a picture at the beginning of this chapter, will serve to illustrate the simplicity of his style of living.

CAMP NEAR MONTEREY, *May 11th, 1847.*

What do you think of this picture of the kitchen of the old general, or rather what do you think of the kitchen itself? It is quite a good representation of it. Here are barrels, tubs made of old barrels, pails, tin dishes and the good old coffee-pot arranged before you, with not a few stumps of old trees,—an odd place I assure you is this same kitchen. It is all out of doors, for there is nothing but a rude roof, made of slabs, with a few large rocks pulled up beneath it on one side, against which the fire is made, to keep it from being entirely blown away. Don't forget the harness of General Taylor's travelling wagon, upon one of the corners of the mess tub, part of which you see on the right, with the interpreter's tent between it and the kitchen.

old brown overcoat, which has been worn in so many campaigns, and which promises to rival in celebrity the gray surtout of Napoleon.

General Taylor's character appears so striking in the actions which we have recorded, and in his admirable correspondence, that it seems hardly necessary in the present instance to conform to the usual biographical rule of presenting it in the shape of a summary.

His debut at Fort Harrison evinced the qualities of firmness, presence of mind, coolness and indomitable courage. The long interval of camp duty, which divides this great epoch of his life, from that which is marked by the events of the Florida campaign, seems to have afforded him means of acquiring those brilliant military accomplishments which recent events have developed. He was a most diligent reader of history, tactics and general literature, and much of his time was devoted to the cultivation of that admirable talent for composition, which appears in his despatches.

A recent writer* has compared these despatches with those of General Greene, in the following remarkable passage.

"When removed to an independent command in the Southern country, Greene at once asserted his claim to the unhesitating honors of a grateful country, and the correspondence, presently to be resumed, will show through what difficulties and embarrassments he fought his way, and how resolutely he overcame them all. To Mr. Reed, he wrote in the confidence of the most confiding friendship, and in what he writes, either to his confidential friends or his official superiors, no one can fail being struck with the simple and manly style in which he expresses himself—the homely, plain English, that best of idioms formerly thought, telling his own story in the most direct form, without a superfluous word or attempt to adorn the simple and stern realities which he described. General Greene's despatches from South Carolina during the campaign of 1781, are worthy of the same praise which, by common consent, at the moment that I am writing, is bestowed on the public and private letters from the conqueror of Monterey and Buena Vista. The curious inquirer may find a further and closer parallel between these gallant

* William B. Reed, Esq., in his *Life of President Reed*.

men, the soldiers of America's unpretending chivalry, in the embarrassments which perplexed their military career, and in the honors won at a comparatively late period of their professional lives. One might have passed away unknown and uncared for in some distant frontier garrison, with no higher function than to watch transplanted Indians, but for the accidental necessity or motives of policy, which led to his appointment to the Mexican frontier ; and Greene would have been comparatively unknown to fame, but for his promotion in the last year of the Revolution, to the command in the Carolinas. Such are the accidents that leads to the developement and illustration of genius."—*Vol. 2, p. 341.*

All the military despatches of General Taylor are characterized not only by precision, energy and vivacity, but by a modesty and ever present sense of propriety, which have won for him the admiration of the whole literary world. But his extraordinary merit as a writer is not confined to his military letters. When placed in circumstances calling for extreme delicacy of expression, his own heart dictates the language of true feeling ; and his style is but an index of the noblest sentiments of humanity.

The following letter addressed to the Honorable Henry Clay, on the occasion of the death of his gallant son Lieutenant-Colonel Clay, will justify this remark.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION.
Agua Nueva, Mexico, March 1st, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR—You will no doubt have received, before this can reach you, the deeply distressing intelligence of the death of your son in the battle of Buena Vista. It is with no wish of intruding upon the sanctuary of parental sorrow, and with no hope of administering any consolation to your wounded heart, that I have taken the liberty of addressing you these few lines ; but I have felt it a duty which I owe to the memory of the distinguished dead, to pay a willing tribute to his many excellent qualities, and while my feelings are still fresh to express the desolation which his untimely loss, and that of other kindred spirits, have occasioned.

I had but a casual acquaintance with your son, until he became for a time a member of my military family ; and I can truly say, that no one ever won more rapidly upon my regard, or established

a more lasting claim to my respect and esteem. Manly and honorable in every impulse, with no feeling but for the honor of the service and of the country, he gave every assurance that in the hour of need I could lean with confidence upon his support. Nor was I disappointed. Under the guidance of himself and the lamented McKee, gallantly did the sons of Kentucky, in the thickest of the strife, uphold the honor of the state and of the country.

A grateful people will do justice to the memory of those who fell on that eventful day. But I may be permitted to express the bereavement which I feel in the loss of valued friends. To your son I felt bound by the strongest ties of private regard ; and when I miss his familiar face, and those of McKee and Hardin, I can say with truth, that I feel no exultation in our success.

With the expression of my deepest and most heartfelt sympathies for your irreparable loss, I remain, my dear sir, most faithfully and sincerely,

Your friend,

Z. TAYLOR.

HON. HENRY CLAY, New Orleans, La.

As a military commander, General Taylor is distinguished by abilities of the very highest order. His whole career since the commencement of the Mexican war, has excited the admiration of military men both in this country and in Europe. His foresight and his powers of combination are not less remarkable than his boldness and decision in taking his attitude before the enemy, and his indomitable firmness in sustaining that attitude to the last. Having once adopted his line of operations, no force can intimidate him or move his resolution. His march from Point Isabel to Fort Brown, through the overwhelming masses of the enemy, evinces this characteristic. His powers of combination were not less signally shown at the siege of Monterey, and the ever memorable field of Buena Vista. His advance from Monterey to fight the last mentioned battle, exhibits the capacity for conducting war on a great scale, and deciding the fate of a whole campaign by a single masterly stroke of strategy. The moral force of his character inspiring confidence among the soldiers, appears also with singular brilliancy in this great battle. His name on that occasion was a "tower of strength."

His calmness, readiness and perfect self-possession amidst the exciting events of the battle-field, appear conspicuous on all occasions. No commander has ever exhibited these qualities in a higher degree.

General Taylor's conduct towards the soldiers under his command is marked by a species of parental kindness, which has gained their affections in a remarkable degree. A contemporary writer observes that "Many of the traits ascribed to General Taylor have been assimilated by some of his admirers to the leading military characteristics of Frederick the Great. But, unlike Frederick, Taylor is anything but a martinet in discipline; and, though his movements of small bodies of troops against vast odds are characterized by the vigorous will and iron determination of Frederick, the arbitrary disposition of the Prussian despot is wholly alien to his tolerant and candid nature."

His popularity with soldiers is equal to that of Napoleon; but he has shown himself much more humane and sparing of human life, than that illustrious commander. The flag of truce at Buena Vista sent to save the lives of the six thousand Mexican cavalry, which were menaced by the terrible dragoons of May, proves that his humanity is by no means confined to the men of his own army. He is ever anxious to spare the unnecessary effusion of blood.

The following extract from the *New York Literary World* is given not only to throw further light on the character of General Taylor, by the testimony of a personal acquaintance; but to make the reader acquainted with some incidents of his life, which have not hitherto been made public. "General Taylor is the American whom Carlyle would recognize as 'a hero' worthy of his pen's most eloquent recognition: THE MAN OF DUTY in an age of Self! An American in everything; in valor, in strong muscular sense; in simplicity and directness and cordiality of feeling; an American in everything save in devotion to our new political God of Expediency.

As plain Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor the writer of this has often seen 'Old Zach,' putting his men through the battalion drill on the northern banks of the Wisconsin in the depth of February. This would seem only characteristic of the man who has since proved himself equally 'Rough and Ready' under the scorching sun of the tropics. But, looking back through long years to many a pleasant

hour spent in the well selected library of the post which Colonel Taylor then commanded, we recur now with singular interest to the agreeable conversations held in the room which was the colonel's favorite resort, amid the intervals of duty. Nor will the reader think these personal reminiscences impertinent, when we add that our object in recurring to them here is simply to mention that remembering alike the wintry drill and the snug book-room, Taylor's hardihood—the idea of which now so readily attaches to his soubriquet of Rough and Ready—would certainly not then have struck a stranger as more characteristic than his liberal-minded intelligence. Remarkable sincerity of manner, a dash of humor amid diffident reserve, blended with a cordiality that for want of a better phrase we should call mesmeric, characterized the mien of the distinguished man, upon whom the eyes of all his countrymen are now fixed with such curious interest. He was one of those few men who instantly impress a stranger with the idea of frankness and reality of character, while still suggesting to the imagination that there was much to study in him. Above all was it apparent that his singular modesty was genuine—was of the soul; that he was a man whose strong individuality his nearest intimates must hesitate to write about and publish to the world in terms of praise. And we know the fact that in one instance a friend whom the general had obliged, when replying to some newspaper disparagement of Taylor's military standing and services at the commencement of the Florida war, was deterred by his knowledge of this trait from communicating his article to the subject of it, lest the terms of eulogy he had employed might be offensive to Taylor. This dislike of puffery, nay, this almost wayward turning one's back upon fame is, however, perfectly consistent with the most jealous sense of what is due to one's personal character; and that quality General Taylor's published correspondence with the Department of War proves he possesses in the most lively degree. He there shows that he leaves the laurels of the hero to take care of themselves, but that the rights and the character of Zachary Taylor must not be tampered with. And this is the quality which will ever prevent him from becoming the tool of party. He is a man that cannot be used by others save in the line of his duty. A man who cannot be approached to be thus used; for there is sometimes a

shrewd fire in the glance of his friendly eye, an epigrammatic heartiness of response bolting forth amid his taciturnity, that would utterly bewilder and confound the ordinary man of the world, who approached him with double dealing phrase, or selfish insincerity of purpose.

With regard to his personal appearance, of all the portraits of General Taylor that we have seen, and there is one in each of the volumes before us, that published in Graham's Magazine strikes us as decidedly the best. In some respects it is flattered, and in others it hardly comes up to the strongly marked character expressed in the face of the original; as a whole, however, it is far more faithful than the others. Its flattery, we imagine, lies in making Taylor younger than he now appears. For his looks in the picture are those which we recall when seeing him just after the close of the Black Hawk campaign, now many years gone by. The stamped medals published in this city lately by J. P. Ridner we should think would better represent his present appearance.

While indulging in these gossiping references, which we know will interest some of our readers, we may here relate an anecdote of General Taylor, which we once heard, amid the early scenes of the Black Hawk war on Rock river, and which, though never verified to our knowledge, still seems most characteristic of the Rough and Ready of later years. Some time after Stillman's defeat by Black Hawk's band, Taylor, marching with a large body of volunteers and a handful of regulars in pursuit of the hostile Indian force, found himself approaching Rock river, then asserted by many to be the true northwestern boundary of the state of Illinois. The volunteers, as Taylor was informed, would refuse to cross the stream. They were militia, they said, called out for the defence of the state, and it was unconstitutional to order them to march beyond its frontier into the Indian country. Taylor thereupon halted his command, and encamped within the acknowledged boundaries of Illinois. He would not, as the relator of the story said, budge an inch further without orders. He had already driven Black Hawk out of the state, but the question of crossing Rock river seemed hugely to trouble his ideas of integrity to the constitution on one side, and military expediency on the other. During the night, however, orders came, either from General Scott or General At-

kinson, for him to follow up Black Hawk to the last. The quietness of the regular colonel meanwhile had rather encouraged the mutinous militia to bring their proceedings to a head. A sort of town meeting was called upon the prairie, and Taylor invited to attend. After listening for some time very quietly to the proceedings, it became Rough and Ready's turn to address the chair. "He had heard," he said, "with much pleasure the views which several speakers had expressed of the independence and dignity of each private American citizen. He felt that all gentlemen there present were his equals—in reality, he was persuaded that many of them would in a few years be his superiors, and perhaps, in the capacity of members of Congress, arbiters of the fortune and reputation of humble servants of the republic like himself. He expected then to obey them as interpreters of the will of the people; and the best proof he could give that he would obey them, was now to observe the orders of those whom the people had already put in the places of authority, to which many gentlemen around him justly aspired. In plain English, gentlemen and fellow-citizens, the word has been passed on to me from Washington to follow Black Hawk, and to take you with me as soldiers. I mean to do both. There are the flat-boats drawn up on the shore, and here are Uncle Sam's men drawn up behind you on the prairie."

"Stranger," added the man who told the story, "the way those militia-men sloped into those flat-boats was a caution. Not another word was said. Had Zach Taylor been with Van Rensselaer at Niagara river, in the last war, I rather think he'd taught him how to get militia-men over a ferry."

Taylor, as is well known, did follow Black Hawk through the prairies of northern Illinois, through the wooded gorges, the rocky fells, the plashy rice pools, the hitherto unbroken wilderness of western Wisconsin. The militia-men gave out from day to day; the country became impassable to horses, and the volunteer settlers who had first seized arms merely to repel an Indian foray, refused to submit their backs to the necessary burdens in carrying their own supplies through the deep swamps and almost impervious forests. At last the very Indians themselves, whom Taylor thus desperately pursued from day to day, and week to week, began to sink

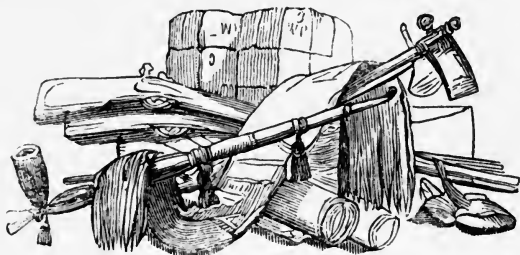
from fatigue and exhaustion : they were found by our men stretched beside their trails, while yet the good Anglo-Norman blood of Taylor's band held out amid sufferings, in the wilderness, which the child of the forest himself could not endure. The battle of the Bad-Axe, and the rout of Black Hawk, by Taylor, at length terminated this arduous march.

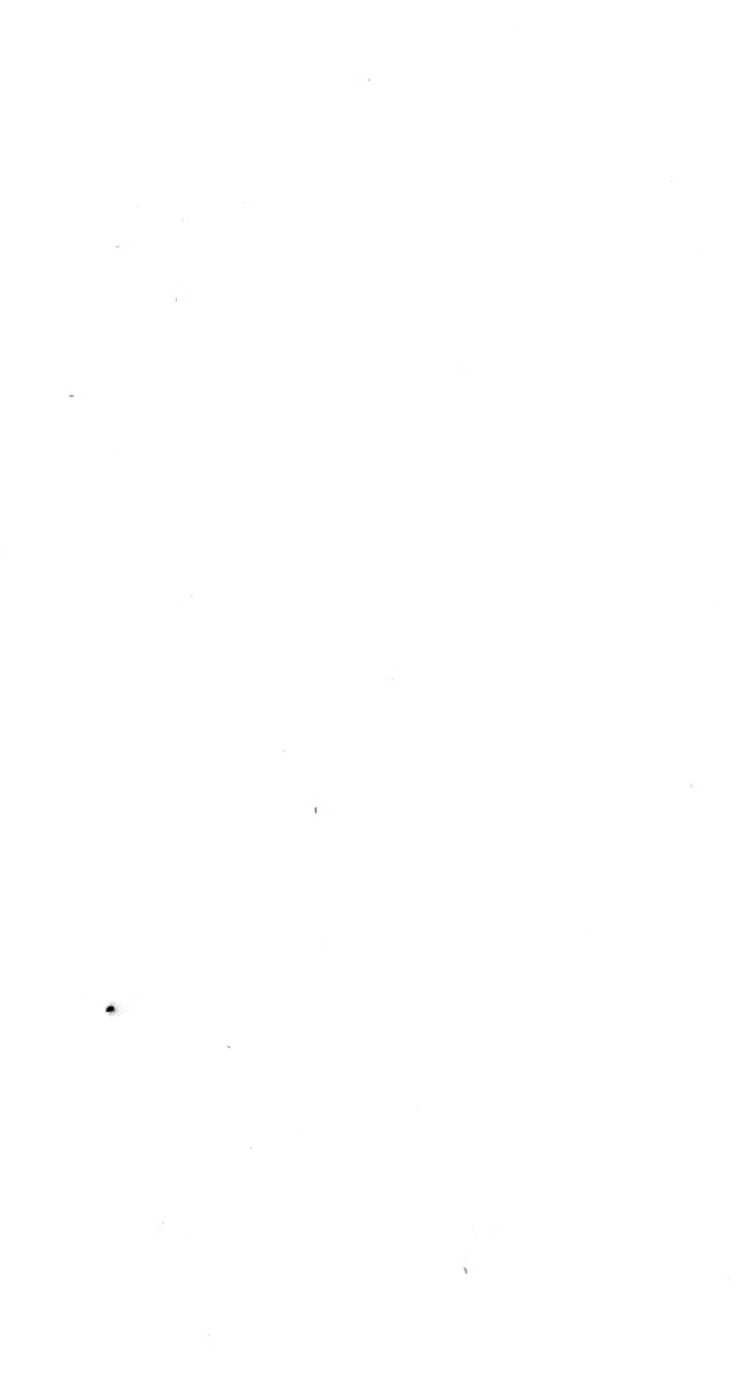
The steamer bearing Atkinson and his reinforcements, reached the junction of the Bad-Axe and the Mississippi, just as the encounter was over, and we believe brought Taylor along with his prisoners, back to Fort Crawford, where, after landing the former, she passed on to St. Louis. When we remember the complimentary reception which Black Hawk met with all along our Atlantic border, how strange it seems, that when the name of his captor was mentioned as the hero of Okeechobee, his countrymen asked, " Who is this Colonel Taylor that has just been brevetted a brigadier ?" Even as it was afterwards asked concerning the hero of Rio Bravo, " Who is this Brigadier Taylor, who has so brilliantly earned the brevet of major-general ?" One might now, without extravagance, venture to predict that the captor of Black Hawk is as well known as was that warrior himself; and that he would probably be received by the people in a progress throughout the country, with demonstrations of affection and respect, at least equal to those which were showered upon the wily Sauk chief, the but too successful rival of the chivalrous, and loyal, and neglected Keokuk."

The following sketch of General Taylor's domestic life and habits, is from the pen of a lady, who has often been a visiter in his family :

" Early in life General Taylor purchased cotton land at Bayou Sara, and under the care of a good overseer, it yielded him a large income. After the Florida war he made rather an unfortunate purchase of a large plantation, with three hundred slaves, for which he paid \$95,000 *cash*. Since owned by the General it has been twice submerged, and subjected him to heavy losses of crops, necessary repairs, &c. In domestic life General Taylor is particularly blessed by the simple and unaffected habits of his wife, happily so congenial to his own. At all army posts where I have seen him, the pursuits of the farmer were united with those of the military command-

ant. At a visit to his house whilst commanding the first infantry, at Prairie du Chien, the Honorable Charles Murray was also there, and the presence of the chamberlain of Queen Victoria made no change in the regular habits of the General. We breakfasted a little after sunrise, dined at one, without *silver forks*, and relished the good substantial fare, served with scrupulous neatness, by faithful and attached servants. The *bacon* on the General's table must always be mounted on the stack of greeno, according to the old Virginia custom. General Taylor is simple in his diet, and an exceedingly temperate man. For many years he kept no liquor of any kind in his house; but on the visit named, which is the last I have made, wine, brandy, &c., were on the table. His personal appearance is by no means military; inclining to corpulency, the trappings of his uniform are irksome and uncomfortable to him. His head is well formed, and was once well covered by rich black hair; his eye is penetrating and bold; his nose well shaped; his mouth not badly shaped, but spoiled by the marked projection of the lower lip; his laugh is hearty and cheerful, displaying a fine white set of teeth. Such was his appearance about six years since, when on a visit to Philadelphia with Mrs. Taylor to see "Betty," and with her, my husband, and myself, to make the northern tour, for the first time in his life. This was after the close of the Florida war. General Taylor's mind is strong, well read in history, and blessed with an excellent memory. He is agreeable in conversation, but unfortunately when much excited by his subject, stammers or hesitates for words to express his meaning with sufficient strength. He is an economist by nature and habit, cares nothing for show in his house or dress, and never yet owned a carriage of any description. Honest, just, and true to his friends. He is no politician, but is devoted heart and soul to HENRY CLAY."







1875



APPENDIX.

General Taylor's Appearance.



RITING to a Philadelphia paper, a correspondent thus describes General Taylor :

“ The General is not over five feet seven or eight inches high, is stout, and inclines to corpulency, would weigh, I should think, near two hundred pounds, and the most prominent thing about him is an unusual shortness of legs.—When

he is sitting he looks like a tall man—not so when standing. His face is intelligent, and it is usually lit up with a benevolent smile. He is in the habit of eclipsing his left eye. His hair is gray and grizzly. In one word, gentlemen, if you can imagine a plain, old Pennsylvania farmer, who had a farm paid for worth five thousand dollars, and nothing else in the world—an independent, jovial, don't care-a-fig kind of an old coon—you have ‘ old Zack ’ before you.”

A writer to the *New Orleans Tropic*, is still more summary. "A very thick set, farmer-looking old gentleman, in a linen roundabout, and remarkable for short legs and long body, mounted on a snow white charger." This is almost as sententious as Sallust.

General Taylor's Family.

Although the General was born in Virginia, his time of residing in that state was very limited. For a long while he lived in Kentucky, and previous to the present war he removed to a country-seat on the Mississippi, near Baton Rouge, where his family still reside. The *Gazette* of that place thus describes the situation :

"It may not be generally known abroad that the residence of General Taylor's family, is in the handsome cottage-like building, romantically situated on the fine bluff fronting the river, and the first building which meets the eye to the left upon entering the beautifully shaded avenue leading from Lafayette street to the barracks. While other places at a distance are contending for the honor of having given birth to old 'Rough and Ready,' we can claim the honor of numbering his respected family among our residents."

General Taylor's Humanity.

Of all General Taylor's good qualities none are more conspicuous than the tenderness of heart, which he has ever exhibited toward the soldiers under his command, as well as to the enemy. Like Washington, he is engaged in war only from stern necessity, not from love of the dear bought honors of military glory. Even the slight incident of stopping his columns at Palo Alto, in order that the men might obtain water, is refreshing ; and the following anecdote is of the same nature. "The first care of General Taylor was to visit the wounded, and see that every comfort was supplied, the constant and well directed energies of the medical department left him but little to do ; every one, whether officer or soldier, had been attended with unwearied care and watchfulness "

The Council at Palo Alto.

“The troops having partaken of their meal, the order was given to get the command under arms. General Taylor here summoned a council of war, composed of the heads of the different commands, in all thirteen, excluding the commander-in-chief. The General, after returning thanks for their support and bravery on the 8th, and wishing to be advised as to what they thought best to be done, called on each to give his opinion. It was then ascertained that but four were in favor of *going ahead*, the other officers composing the council voted, some to intrench where they were and await the assistance of the volunteers, and others to retire at once to Point Isabel; but the general said, ‘*I will be at Fort Brown before night if I live.*’

Those who voted for going ahead, as they watched the countenance of the General, might have seen the smile of approbation that lighted up the old man’s honest face at the moment, though he bowed with respect to the opinions of those who differed from him; and in saying *engrave on the sacred banner of the stars and stripes the names of Taylor, McIntosh, Morris, Scott and Duncan*, I mean no reflection upon those who voted against them—they were men tried in many a field before, and their deeds on that day proved them equal to the best.

Lieutenant Ridgely, who was entitled to a vote in the council, was at the time in attendance on the lamented Ringgold, and therefore had no voice in the matter, but as he galloped up to the battery, on returning from his visit to the major, some one said, ‘Ridgely, were you at the council?’ and he replied ‘no, I did not know that one had been called, but I hope old Zack will go ahead and bring the matter to close quarters.’ ”

We have given the address of the General to the volunteers, who were about to leave him for a different scene of the war. That parting was an affecting one; but the removal of the gallant fellows who had endeared themselves to him, amid the dangers of Buena Vista, was still more so. As the Mississippi regiment marched by him, on its return home, he attempted to address them; but the recollection of their heroism, and the respect and affection

which they were now anxious to pour upon him for the last time, overpowered him, and with tears gushing down his aged cheeks he exclaimed:—"Go on, boys—go on—*I can't speak.*"

It will be remembered that while Taylor was marching against Santa Anna, most of his troops were withdrawn from him by General Scott, and he was compelled to fall back toward Monterey. We have given but the bare fact in the narrative; but it requires little imagination to conceive that the feelings of an ordinary military man under such circumstances, would be of the most harassing kind. Not so with General Taylor. Great in difficulty as in danger, and destitute of that little ambition which would sacrifice even personal comfort to the desire of popularity, he showed himself as willing to obey, as he had formerly been able to command. He yielded the price of glory and advantage, to his brother officer, without a murmur, and quietly retired to the scene of his former glories. The lesson he thus gave to the world might be profitably learned by many of his contemporaries, far below him in rank and usefulness.

General Taylor at Buena Vista.

T. F. Marshall, who conveyed General Scott's requisition to Taylor, made the following excellent remarks in a late speech at New Orleans.

"General Taylor fought and won the battle of Monterey. He advanced upon Saltillo, and preparatory to a descent upon San Luis Potosi and ultimately upon the city of Mexico itself. He had marched to Victoria, to discover if there was any other pass in the mountains but that of the Rinconada, through which he could advance and avoid the waterless desert beyond Buena Vista, or through which the enemy might enter the valley of the Rio Grande and fall upon his rear. Whilst this reconnoissance was being made, he (Mr. Marshall) was ordered to proceed to General Taylor's camp with despatches. These were the despatches which announced to General Taylor that the flower of his army was to be taken from him, to operate on a new base, and ordered him merely to stand on the defensive.

Mr. Marshall said, great an opinion as he had formed of General

Taylor before he met him at Victoria, he was totally unprepared for the loftiness of character displayed by him on receiving those despatches. He, upon whose crest victory had perched, the lion who was preparing for another spring upon the foe, saw without a murmur that his claws were to be torn from him, that he was to be enfeebled to the defensive, and never did he conceive that a great soldier, fresh from the field of victories, could submit in the simple, uncomplaining manner General Taylor did to orders depriving him of his right arm.

The best of his troops were withdrawn from him. With such as were left under his immediate command he retraced his steps to Monterey, and shortly after joined General Wool at Saltillo. Duplicates of the despatches had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and, acquainted with the weakness of General Taylor's force, he soon made demonstrations indicating an intention to advance and give him battle. It was now, Mr. Marshall said, General Taylor displayed those qualities which proclaim him the greatest military chieftain of the age.

It was known that the enemy was overwhelmingly superior in numbers and commanded by their most skilful general, and military critics declared the only course to pursue was to fall back upon Monterey. General Taylor, with a perception of all the consequences of such a step, thought and acted otherwise. Fronting him was an enemy twenty thousand strong; in his rear was Urrea with three thousand cavalry; his line of communication ran through a country containing half a million of population, waiting but the appearance of success on their side to take up arms, and knowing that even to retreat upon Monterey would be claimed as a victory; that then he would be beleaguered by an army of twenty-five thousand men, and that his whole line would be cut up, he determined not to give an inch, but to stake all upon a battle, in which every thing was to be gained by victory, and disaster could not have been increased by defeat. The result is known. The courage of General Taylor, said Mr. Marshall, no one disputed, but some denied him great mental powers; he, Mr. M., pretended to some capacity in judging of men's qualities, and if he ever saw genius, military genius of the highest order, he saw it in General Taylor. It may be that God, in great

emergencies, had inspired him with those thoughts which rendered him invincible ; but, said Mr. M., the result is the same—there is no difference. To the great soldier, Mr. M. said, in his intercourse with General Taylor, he found was added the man of strict honor, and either as a man or as his commander, he loved him.”

The following incidents illustrate the quiet coolness of the General, which never entirely deserts him, even amid the uproar of a battle field.

His abrupt close of the conference with Ampudia, when treating for the surrender of Monterey, is as full of meaning as anything in Wellington’s despatches—“ Sir, I hold you, and your town, and your army, in the hollow of my hand, and you know it. The conference is closed—in thirty minutes you shall hear from my batteries.”

Of course General Taylor would not have said this to a gallant and respected enemy. He would have spoken in a very different vein to a brave and gallant general, who had maintained his position as long as it could be maintained, and now, having satisfied the demands of honor and duty to their full extent, was ready with the frankness of a soldier and a gentleman, to accept the necessity of his position. But to Ampudia, neither brave nor gallant, and whiffling over a capitulation which he knew to be inevitable, the response was as fitting as it was well timed and effective.

There was, on the other hand, a delicious touch of humor in the old General’s acknowledgment to the “ boys ” who laughed at him for dodging. In the thick of the fight at Buena Vista, when the balls were flying “ considerable,” General Taylor saw some of his men ducking their heads as the missiles whizzed by, and called out, “ No dodging gentlemen ; soldiers never dodge.” But in a few moments a twenty-four pounder came humming so near the old gentleman’s nose that he involuntarily ducked his own head—whereat some of the “ boys ” “ snickered right out.” “ Dodge the balls, gentlemen,” exclaimed old Zack, as grave as a mustard pot ; “ dodge the balls, gentlemen, but don’t run.”

In the same style was his quiet remark at Resaca de la Palma, where the balls made lively music too. One of them cut off a piece of his coat-tail ; whereupon he drily remarked to one who was near him, “ These balls are getting excited.”

But the best thing he is said to have said was also at Buena Vista. It was not only quaint but grand ; there was a sort of heroic largeness about it, in conception and expression, than which we know of nothing that more fills the mind's eye. It was when the last, desperate, almost overwhelming charge was made upon Captain Bragg's battery. The captain saw the mighty cohort coming, with an anxious gaze, for there was no infantry at hand to sustain him. Placing his pieces in position, he hurried to the General, who was not far off, to represent that his little band would be ridden over, and to beg for a reinforcement. "I have no reinforcement to give you," answered the General, "but Major Bliss and I will support you."

"Major Bliss and I" accordingly put spurs to their horses and took post beside the cannon. We all know what the result was.

In the speech delivered by Colonel Jefferson Davis, in New Orleans, on the occasion of the reception there of the volunteers from General Taylor's camp, he said that General Taylor had shown himself the distinguished soldier of the age, yet he was equally remarkable for his kindness of heart and simplicity of habits, his strong judgment and excellent sense. He alluded to the fact that General Taylor had shared the humblest soldier's fortune in the campaign ; that he had in every thing identified himself with his troops. He alluded to that hour of the battle of Buena Vista, when the day seemed, if not lost, to be going against our arms—when General Taylor, amid the thickest of the iron hail, rode upon the plateau, and calmly surveyed the scene. Vast as were the consequences of that hour, he appeared to fear no danger, expect no harm. From that moment (said Colonel Davis) the volunteers felt assured of victory. The presence of that old man inspired a courage that could not be overcome, and not a soldier present, said he, (pointing to the regiment before him,) but felt then willing to die rather than yield an inch.

It was not, (continued Colonel Davis,) alone on the battle field that we learned to love General Taylor. The excitement of the carnage over, the same soul that could remain unmoved when his friends were falling like leaves around him, who could look unblanched upon the front of the thundering artillery, become the poor

soldier's most sympathizing friend, and the eye so stern in battle was as mild as the tender hearted matron's.

General Taylor's Pony.

This animal has acquired almost as much celebrity as his master, and several good anecdotes are told of him. He is known as "Old Whitey," (the *Christian* name being the same as that of "Rough and Ready,") and is a general favorite among the soldiers. The following ludicrous incident connected with the white dignitary deserves insertion.

General Taylor's markee, at Victoria, was about a mile above that of General Patterson, and between the two the Tennessee cavalry was encamped. General Taylor was riding from his quarters to General Patterson's one day, and on his route passed close to a Tennessee trooper, who was rubbing down his horse. Totally ignorant of the rank of the plainly dressed old man, and struck by the beauty of his animal, he accosted him with, "Look here, stranger, wouldn't you like to swap that ar pony?"

"No, friend," quietly responded the General; "he is a favorite nag of mine, and I do not desire to part with him."

A comrade of the trooper's recognizing the General, said to him in an under tone, "Bill, you fool, don't you know who you're a talking to? That's General Taylor."

Now Bill regarding "Rough and Ready" as the greatest man on the face of earth, was terrified that he had put his foot on it, and stammered out—

"G-g-gineral, I-I-I didn't know it was you—I beg p-p-pardon, g-g-gineral." The old commander kindly offered his hand to the trooper, to relieve him from his embarrassment, inquired his name and residence, complimented the Tennesseans, telling him that he had found them the bravest of the brave, and rode quietly on.

On the march of General Taylor's division from Monterey to Victoria, when encamped near a small town, this same pony was stolen, and the General immediately despatched a message to the alcade,

informing that worthy functionary of the fact, and that if he was not restored he should take the priest's horse. The threat had the desired effect, for in a very short space of time the pony was trotted up to the General's tent "With the compliments of the alcade."

The following are extracts of a letter, ascribed to General Taylor, giving his reasons for the leniency of the terms at Monterey. The authenticity of the letter has been doubted by some; but the correctness of the views which it presents, and the *probability* of its genuineness, seem to justify its insertion.

"I do not believe the authorities at Washington are at all satisfied with my conduct in regard to the terms of the capitulation entered into with the Mexican commander, which you no doubt have seen, as they have been made public through the official organ, and copied into various other newspapers.

"I have this moment received an answer (to my despatches announcing the surrender of Monterey, and the circumstances attending the same,) from the Secretary of War, stating that 'it was regretted by the President that it was not deemed advisable to insist on the terms I had proposed in my first communication to the Mexican commander, in regard to giving up the city'—adding that 'the circumstances which dictated, no doubt justified the change.' Although the terms of capitulation may be considered too liberal on our part, by the President and his advisers, as well as by many others at a distance, particularly by those who do not understand the position we occupied, (otherwise they might come to a different conclusion in regard to the matter,) yet, on due reflection, I see nothing to induce me to regret the course I pursued. The proposition on the part of General Ampudia, which had much to do in determining my course in the matter, was based on the ground that our government had proposed to him to settle the existing difficulties by negotiation, (which I knew was the case, without knowing the result,) which was then under consideration by the proper authorities, and which he (General Ampudia,) had no doubt would result favorably, as the whole of his people were in favor of peace.

If so, I considered the further effusion of blood not only unnecessary, but improper.

“ Their force was also considerably larger than ours ; and from the size and position of the place, we could not completely invest it ; so that the greater portion of their troops, if not the whole, had they been disposed to do so, could, any night, have abandoned the city, at once entered the mountain passes and effected their retreat, do what we could ! Had we been put to the alternative of taking the place by storm, (which there is no doubt we should have succeeded in doing,) we should, in all probability, have lost fifty or one hundred men in killed, besides the wounded, which I wished to avoid, as there appeared to be a prospect of peace, even if a distant one. I also wished to avoid the destruction of women and children, which must have been very great, had the storming process been resorted to. Besides, they had a very large and strong fortification a short distance from the city, which, if carried with the bayonet, must have been taken at great sacrifice of life ; and with our limited train of heavy or battering artillery it would have required twenty or twenty-five days to take it by regular approaches.

“ That they should have surrendered a place nearly as strong as Quebec, well fortified, under the direction of skilful engineers, their works garnished with forty-two pieces of artillery, abundantly supplied with ammunition, garrisoned by seven thousand regular and two thousand irregular troops, in addition to some thousand citizens, capable of (and no doubt actually) bearing arms, and aiding in its defence, to an opposing force of half their number, scantily supplied with provisions, and with a light train of artillery, is among the unaccountable occurrences of the times.

“ I am decidedly opposed to carrying the war beyond Saltillo in this direction, which place has been entirely abandoned by the Mexican forces, all of whom have been concentrated at San Luis Potosi ; and I shall lose no time in taking possession of the former, as soon as the cessation of hostilities referred to expires—which I have notified the Mexican authorities will be the case on the 13th instant, by the direction of the President of the United States.

“ If we are (in the language of Mr. Polk and General Scott) under the necessity of ‘conquering a peace,’—and that by taking

the capital of the country,—we must go to Vera Cruz, take that place, and then march on the city of Mexico. To do so in any other direction, I consider out of the question. But, admitting that we conquer a peace by doing so,—say, at the end of the next twelve months—will the amount of blood and treasure, which must be expended in doing so, be compensated by the same? I think not,—especially, if the country we subdue is to be given up: and I imagine there are but few individuals in our country who think of annexing Mexico to the United States.

“ I do not intend to carry on my operations (as previously stated) beyond Saltillo,—deeming it next to impracticable to do so. It then becomes a question as to what is best to be done. It seems to me, the most judicious course to be pursued on our part, would be to take possession, at once, of the line we would accept by negotiation, extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, and occupy the same, or keep what we already have possession of; and that, with Tampico, (which I hope to take in the course of the next month, or as soon as I can get the means of transportation,) will give us all on this side of the Sierra Madre, and as soon as I occupy Saltillo, will include six or seven states or provinces, thus holding Tampico, Victoria, Monterey, Saltillo, Monclova, Chihuahua, (which I presume General Wool has possession of by this time,) Santa Fe, and the Californias, and say to Mexico, ‘ Drive us from the country !’ throwing on her the responsibility and expense of carrying on offensive war—at the same time closely blockading all her ports on the Pacific and the Gulf. A course of this kind, if persevered in for a short time, would soon bring her to her proper senses, and compel her to sue for peace,—provided there is a government in the country sufficiently stable for us to treat with, which, I fear, will hardly be the case for many years to come. Without large reinforcements of volunteers from the United States, say ten or fifteen thousand, (those previously sent out having already been greatly reduced by sickness and other casualties,) I do not believe it would be advisable to march beyond Saltillo, which is more than two hundred miles beyond our depots on the Rio Grande, a very long line on which to keep up supplies (over a land route, in a country like this) for a large force, and certain to be attended with

an expense which will be frightful to contemplate when closely looked into.

“From Saltillo to San Luis Potosi, the next place of importance on the road to the city of Mexico, is three hundred miles,—one hundred and thirty badly watered, where no supplies of any kind could be procured for men or horses. I have informed the War Department that twenty thousand efficient men would be necessary to insure success, if we march on that place,—(a city containing a population of sixty thousand, where the enemy could bring together and sustain, besides the citizens, an army of fifty thousand,) a force which, I apprehend, will hardly be collected by us with the train necessary to feed it, as well as to transport various other supplies, particularly ordnance and munitions of war.”

Buena Vista.

The stirring events of Buena Vista have been made the subjects of a fine poem, by Captain Albert Pike, who shared the dangers of the battle, and is therefore peculiarly fitted to describe it. The poem was written for the Philadelphia Saturday Courier, “And we have met with no poetry,” says that sheet, “since the commencement of the war in Mexico, that has so stirred our blood as this splendid poem. It should grace a prominent page in the volume that conveys to posterity in homely prose, the thrilling scenes and events which it celebrates. Our friend dates his letter, ‘Camp Buena Vista, Mexico, March 12th, 1847.’”

Buena Vista.

From Rio Grande's waters to the icy capes of Maine
Let all exult, for we have met the enemy again ;
Beneath their stern old mountains, we have met them in their pride,
And roll'd from Buena Vista back the battle's bloody tide ;
When the enemy came surging, like the Mississippi's flood,
And the reaper, Death, was busy with his sickle red with blood.

Sant Anna boasted loudly that before two hours were past,
His lancers through Saltillo should pursue us thick and fast ;

On came his solid infantry, line marching after line ;
Lo ! their great standards in the sun like sheets of silver shine !
With thousands after thousands, yea, with more than ten to one,
A forest of bright bayonets gleam fiercely in the sun.

Lo ! Guanajuato's Regiment ! Lo ! Puebla's boasted corps !
And Guadalajara's chosen troops, all veterans tried before,
And galloping upon the sight, four thousand lances gleam,
Where waving in the morning light, their blood-red pinions stream.
And there their stern artillery climbs up the broad plateau,
To-day they mean to strike at us an overwhelming blow.

Now, hold on strongly to the heights, for lo ! the mighty tide
Comes thundering like an avalanche, deep, terrible and wide :
Now, Illinois, stand steady—now, Kentucky, to their aid,
For a portion of our waving line is broken and dismay'd ;
A regiment of fugitives are fleeing from the field,
And the day is lost if Illinois and brave Kentucky yield !

One of O'Brien's guns is gone ! on, on ! their masses drift,
And their infantry and lancers now are passing to our left ;
Our troops are driven from the hills, and flee in wild dismay,
And round us gather thick and dark the Mexican array.
Sant Anna thinks the day is gained, and riding yet more near—
Minon's dark cloud of lancers sternly menace now our rear.

Now, Lincoln, gallant gentleman ! lies dead upon the field,
Who strove to stay those men that in the storm of bullets reeled ;
Now, Washington, fire fast and true ! fire Sherman, fast and far :
Lo ! Bragg comes thundering to the front, to breast the adverse war ;
Sant Anna thinks the day is gain'd, on, on, his masses crowd,
And the din of battle rises up more terrible and loud.

Not yet ! our brave old general comes—he will regain the day—
Kentucky, to the rescue ! Mississippi to the fray !
Now charge, brave Illinoisians ; and Davis drives the foe,
And back upon his rifles the red waves of lancers flow ;
Upon them, yet once more, my braves ; the avalanche is stay'd,
Back rolls the Mexique multitude, all broken and dismay'd.

Ho ! May ! to Buena Vista ! for the enemy is near,
And we have none there who can stop their vehement career.
Still swelling, downward comes the tide—Porter and Yell are slain ;
Marshall, before him, drives apart, but still they charge in vain ;
And now, in wild confusion mix'd, pursuers and pursued,
On to Saltillo wildly drift, a frantic multitude.

Upon them, with your squadrons, May !—out leaps the flaming steel,
Before his serried columns, how the frightened lancers reel ;
They flee amain ! now to the left, to stay their triumph there,
Or else the day is surely lost in horror and despair,
For their hosts are pouring swiftly on, like a river in the spring,
Our flank is turned, and on our left their cannon's thundering.

Now, brave Artillery ! bold Dragoons ! steady, my men, and calm,
 Through rain, and hail, and thunder,* now nerve each gallant arm ;
 What though their shots fall round us here, still thicker than the hail !
 We'll stand against them, as the rock stands firm against the gale :
 Lo ! their battery is silenced now ! our iron hail still showers—
 They falter, halt, retreat, Hurrah ! the glorious day is ours !

Now, charge again, Sant Anna ! or the day is surely lost,
 For back, like broken leaves, along our left your hordes are tossed—
 Still louder roars his batteries, his strong reserve moves on ;
 More work is there before you, men, ere the good fight is won ;
 Now for your wives and children, men ! stand steady yet once more !
 Now for your lives, your honor, fight, as you never fought before.

Ho ! Hardin breasts it bravely ! McKee and Bissell there
 Stand firm, before the storm of balls that fill the astonished air—
 The lancers are upon them too, the foe swarms ten to one—
 Hardin is slain ! McKee and Clay the last time see the sun ;
 And many another gallant heart in that last desperate fray
 Grows cold, its last thoughts turning t'wards its lov'd ones far away.

Still sullenly the cannon roar'd, but died away at last,
 And o'er the dead and dying came the evening shadows fast,
 And then above the mountains, spread the cold moon's silvery shield,
 And patiently and pityingly look'd down upon the field,
 And careless of his wounded, and neglectful of his dead,
 Despairingly and sullenly in the night the foeman fled.

And thus on Buena Vista's heights a long day's work was done,
 And there our brave old General another battle won :
 And still our glorious banner waves, unstained by flight or shame,
 And the Mexicans, among their hills, still tremble at our name.
 So honor unto those who stood ! Disgrace to those that fled,
 And everlasting glory to the brave and gallant dead.

The following lines on an incident of the same battle are also worthy of insertion.

"A little more Grape, Captain Bragg"

The old hero stands on the brow of the hill,
 With his heart in the thick of the fray,
 Where his squadrons beneath him are battling still,
 On the eve of that terrible day ;
 His quick eye has numbered the mustering bands,
 And he points to the enemy's flag,
 While the battery answers the old man's commands,
 "A little more grape, Captain Bragg !"

* A portion of the day, during the battle, a hail storm swept over the field, and rain, accompanied with thunder and lightning.

The foeman charge home with a thundering shock,
And a touch of Castilian pride :—
They dash on our lines like a wave on the rock,
When the storm is abroad on the tide ;
The wave falleth back, but the rock standeth still—
There is *heart* in that bristling crag—
And the old man stands yet on the brow of the hill—
“ A little more grape, Captain Bragg !”

Then spoke the loud cannon—its quick thunders again,
Like spirits they scream on the air,
And the fallen are lying in swarths on the plain—
Death's busiest reapers are there—
But now is the song of those death-reapers still,
Yet let not our battle-song lag,
Hurrah ! to the old man that stood on the hill—
And “ A little more grape, Captain Bragg !”

Colonel Davenport.

Colonel William Davenport, who commanded the rear guard in the battle of Okeechobee, was born in the neighborhood of Petersburg, Virginia. At a very early age he lost his father, and when about nineteen, removed to North Carolina, with the laudable object of obtaining means to relieve his widowed mother. His efforts were in a great measure successful. He remained at Raleigh for some years, the support not only of his mother, but of the younger members of the family. In these humble but praiseworthy pursuits, he so far gained the esteem and affection of the citizens, by his industry and modesty, that when the war of 1812 occurred, they applied for a commission for him in the army. This was so unexpected to its object, that the first notice he received of it, was by a committee waiting on him with a commission of captaincy dated August 10th, 1812. This he gratefully accepted, and was ordered to Philadelphia, and attached to the Pennsylvania troops. To this, is to be attributed the circumstance of his being noticed in the army registers as a native of Pennsylvania. The silent and delicate manner in which the inhabitants of Raleigh procured this commission, has always been a subject of gratitude, and warm acknowledgment to the colonel.

Davenport immediately joined the army on the northern frontier, where he was actively employed during the whole war. Here his

duties were arduous. Constantly on guard or picket companies, and exposed to nightly attacks from the enemy, he was frequently two or three days without sleep, and almost without food and drink. In one attack on the picket-guard he captured Colonel Fitzgerald, a gallant officer, who was then severely wounded.

Colonel Davenport was in the battle of Fort George, where he performed effective service. After peace was declared, he was ordered with eight hundred men to establish a military post at Block Island on the upper Mississippi. He was obliged to lead his men, through almost impenetrable wilds, among tribes of hostile Indians, and where a white man had never before trod. From Fort Armstrong he was ordered to Arkansas to build Fort Gibson. During the Seminole campaign he was placed on the recruiting service at Nashville, where was commenced his friendship for the person and family of General Jackson. When the Black Hawk war broke out, Colonel Davenport commanded at Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri. Here he received notice from General Atkinson, requesting a part of the command to act against the Indians. This request reached the fort in the evening, and early the next morning the troops were embarked, the colonel's furniture disposed of, and himself on the way to join General Atkinson. Throughout this campaign Davenport did good and effective service. On one occasion, being ordered to pursue the Indians to an island at the mouth of the Badaxe, he waded with his men through mud and water three feet deep, and gained the island. Here he saw but a solitary man, who was seated on a log holding a rifle in one hand and a captured squaw in the other. Upon perceiving Colonel Davenport he called out for "God's sake not to advance, or he was a dead man." The colonel replied, "I came here to advance, and here goes." The next moment a discharge of muskets from behind the logs, killed five men, and wounded others. The Indians were routed and captured. The friendly notice was given by Captain Gentry, a gallant Missourian, who afterwards fell in the battle of Okeechobee. At Block Island the aged Black Hawk resigned his command to Keeokuk, in the presence of Colonel Davenport.

After this war the colonel was ordered to Fort Snelling, the upper post on the Mississippi, and General Taylor to Prairie du

Chien. From this time, with very few interruptions, these officers were associated in the same regiment; and it is only since Davenport has been full colonel that a separation has taken place.

General Taylor was now at Prairie du Chien, commanding the first regiment, and Davenport at Fort Gibson, commanding the sixth. A transfer was made between these two officers, so that the colonel was ordered to Taylor's position, while that officer took charge of his own. This was subsequent to the Florida war. During that trying period, Davenport was lieutenant-colonel of the first regiment, and served four years, performing duties, as difficult as those of any officer in the country. At the battle of Okeechobee, he commanded the rear guard, and his position probably saved him from falling with many others on that trying day. While pursuing the Indians after the battle, no food passed his lips for forty-five hours.

After the close of the war, Colonel Davenport and his lady accompanied General Taylor and his family in their first northern tour. He was then ordered to Prairie du Chien, where he enjoyed almost a year of rest, but as before stated, he was afterwards promoted to the command of Fort Gibson, and subsequently transferred to his first post. While here he obtained leave to visit Philadelphia, from which place it was his intention to tender his resignation to government; but he was hindered from doing so by the opening of the present war with Mexico. He was then ordered to Jefferson Barracks, to prepare the volunteers and newly raised rifle corps for service. After performing these duties, he was extremely anxious to join that part of his regiment in active service, and made several efforts for that purpose; but although the department informed him that his motives were appreciated, yet still his services were too important at the barracks to accede to his wishes. At length, however, after a tedious and mortifying service, he was ordered to take command of Matamoras. He is now in command of the military district of the lower Rio Grande, governor of Matamoras, commandant of the port, collector of the customs, civil judge, &c. His duties are severe, with but little prospect of reaping many laurels by them.

Colonel Davenport has been twice brevetted, once according to law, for ten years' faithful service, and again for his services in Flo-

rida. He has been on constant duty for thirty-five years, with only an occasional leave of absence, and during all that long term has never had the slightest official charge made against him. He is a man of sterling integrity, of very sound judgment, and considerable information. In tactics he enforces strict discipline, and is so good a drill officer, that however remote his command may be from inspection, it is always ready for any service, the moment it is called upon. While in Florida, the colonel earned from the Indians the title of the *stubborn chief*, on account of his determination of purpose; and a proof of his worth is given by the fact that in all the reductions which have been made in the army, he has been retained; without making the least effort for the purpose, either personally or by means of friends.

In 1823 Colonel Davenport was married to a lady of Philadelphia. In that city he is well known, and highly esteemed, and most of his leaves of absence are spent there. He ranks among his private friends nearly all the officers of the old army. He was very intimate with General Brown; and he now holds a similar intimacy with Generals Scott and Gaines.

Colonel Davenport is in his fifty-ninth year, in easy pecuniary circumstances, of a vigorous and robust constitution, and capable of still encountering great exposure and fatigue. He is a warm friend, and takes great delight in company and conversation. His principal amusements are reading and field sports, but he never permits these to interfere with any known duty.

General Taylor's Benevolence to his Soldiers.

The following anecdote is communicated by a correspondent of the Montgomery, Ala., Journal :

“The General had occasion to visit Point Isabel, after the battle of Buena Vista, and the captain of the steamboat had reserved a suite of state rooms for the General's accommodation. There were several sick and wounded volunteers on the boat, en route for New Orleans, who had to take the wayfare incident to a crowded boat, and particularly so on this occasion. General Taylor saw all this, and at once ordered these men to be placed in his state rooms, and proper

attention paid them. It was rather a cold, rainy day when this occurred. The deck hands and many others on the boat did not know General Taylor. The wind blew high, and the firemen had raised a sail in front of the boilers to protect themselves from the rain, and under this sail there were some old mattresses; here General Taylor lay down and went to sleep. At supper time great inquiries were made for the General, and servants sent off to look him up. But he could not be found! At last some one going below, inquired of a fireman if he had seen anything of such and such a man—the fireman said no, but added, “there is a clever old fellow asleep there under the sail, in front of the fire!” It was General Taylor. Yes, sweet indeed must have been the sleep of such a man who has the heart to change places with the poor sick soldier, as General Taylor did on this occasion; such humanity stands out in bold relief, and greatly mitigates the evils incident to war.”

General Wool and the Volunteers.

We insert below the warm tribute of respect paid by the chief officers of the first Illinois regiment, and the brave General Lane, of the Indiana brigade, to General Wool, on taking leave of his command at Buena Vista. It is a triumphant vindication of the sound military policy which this brave and accomplished officer adopted and vigorously pursued in his extraordinary management of the volunteer forces of his army. He has proved by the result of his own example in the enforcement of discipline and the establishment of a strict but just military police, that volunteers, when properly officered, become the most powerful army that can be brought into the field. They are then taught to acquire the ordinary efficiency of regular soldiers, while they are appealed to as citizens, and retain in full vigor that spirit-rousing stimulant of state and national pride, which worked so magically on the battle ground of Buena Vista.

There is another fact developed, not merely by the immediate tribute of respect to which we call attention, but in the general language of the volunteers since the great battle, which we regard as highly auspicious for the service. It is very evident that most of

them have changed their views entirely as to the necessity of discipline. They experienced its benefits in that terrible conflict, and they now appreciate its importance. What would have been their fate if discipline had been previously disregarded? Their force on the battle field was but 4,610, of which more than 4,000 were volunteers, who, in the preceding summer, had been organized into the service by General Wool in the respective states of which they were private citizens.

They were now surrounded by an army of twenty-four thousand of the best disciplined, the most numerous officered, and the most veteran army ever raised in Mexico. Ten thousand of them with Ampudia had been under fire at Monterey, and there were officers and men who had fought against old Spain, and made civil war their pastime for twenty-five years. What, we repeat the question, would have been the fate of our brave and devoted little army, if discipline had been neglected? Probably in one hour they would have been thrown into confusion, and then, if the sanguinary design of the Swarrow of Mexico had been carried out, seconded by his licensed assassins, the infuriated lancers—and his Cossacks, the rancheros—who were placed as additional outposts to cut off every straggler, and were all thirsting for blood and plunder, not one man of our heroic band would have survived to tell the tale of horror.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we find not only a change of opinion as to the absolute necessity of discipline, but an outpouring of grateful admiration towards General Wool for his steady determination in enforcing it, and his admirable example in directing it to the best advantage on the field of battle. He had known battle fields before. But the volunteers, with the exception of one regiment, had never been under fire. He knew that his sole dependence in the hour of trial would be from that self-confiding bravery which discipline alone inspires. Accordingly he had from the moment his army was concentrated at San Antonio in the latter part of August, until (after accomplishing a march of nine hundred miles) he presented them in front of Saltillo on the alarm of General Worth in the latter part of December, and thence up to the very day of battle, directed the whole energies of a long military life to make his column not only the proudest model of an army in all its appointments, equipments

and supplies, but the best in its discipline and military deportment. In this he did succeed, but it cost him his popularity with many of the volunteers. They had dreamed not of the hardships of drill and subordination, of order and discipline, but of the romances of military marches and encampments; and consequently, as the *Saltillo Picket Guard* in his plain style says, "No general ever had so many curses for so few offences." But now how changed is the language of the volunteers.

"I take back," says one of them in an Arkansas paper, "all I have said against General Wool." "Little as his column liked him before the battle," says another, "they all now admit that he is a splendid general." "General Wool," says a third, [*Telegraph and Review*, Alton, April 9, 1847,] "behaved most gallantly, and has earned all the country can do for him, besides the respect, esteem and admiration of his brigade, who, before the battle, had a long account of what they considered petty annoyances, treasured against him."

Quotations of similar purport might be multiplied, but we will add only the following:

The Illinois Volunteers to General Wool.

BRAZOS SANTIAGO, June 23d, 1847.

BRIG. GEN. WOOL:—The officers and soldiers of the first regiment, Illinois volunteers, on the eve of leaving Mexico for their homes, would do violence to their own feelings did they not tender to their immediate commanding general a testimonial of their regard. Upon entering the service a year since, they were not prepared to appreciate the importance of discipline and drill, and consequently complained of them as onerous and unnecessary. Complaints were loud and many.

Their judgments convinced, these feelings have undergone a change, and they now thank you for your untiring exertions to make them useful to their country and a credit to the state.

Whatever, sir, of service we may have done our common country, or whatever of honor we may have done the state of Illinois, to General J. E. Wool is due the credit. You, sir, brought your column into the field well provided for and disciplined, and fought them well when you got them there; and should our country ever

again need our services in the field, it would be our proudest wish to again meet the enemy under the immediate command of one in whose energy, watchfulness and courage we and the whole army have the most unlimited confidence.

With the best wishes for your future fame and happiness, on the part of the regiment we beg leave to subscribe ourselves your friends.

Signed by

W. WEATHERFORD,

Col. first Reg. Ill. Vol.

W. B. WARREN, Lieut. Col.

and forty company and staff officers.

General Lane to General Wool.

BUENA VISTA, MEXICO, May 20th, 1847.

DEAR GENERAL : In a few days we are to take up the line of march homeward, and from my understanding of the law, I am soon to be discharged, and I greatly hope that the cause which gave rise to my appointment may soon cease to exist. A speedy and honorable peace with this country is much desired by every American citizen. But, my dear General, I cannot think of parting with you without expressing my high opinion of your great worth as a military man. During the time that I have been under your command, I have found you prompt, faithful and vigilant, in the discharge of your duty, looking alone to the good of the service and the honor and glory of our country. A strict disciplinarian, you have discharged your duty with ability, and an impartiality worthy a great man. Your exertions as second in command at the great and glorious battle of Buena Vista, moving to and fro in every part of the field, watching the movements of the enemy, exposed to danger almost every moment of the day, ordering and disposing of our forces in the best manner to meet and repulse the enemy. By your exertions, coolness and courage in gaining this victory, you have won laurels and a fame that will endure as long as the traces of American history shall exist. —Hoping that you may live long to enjoy the thanks of a grateful people,

I remain, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOSEPH LANE, Brig. Gen.

BRIG. GEN. WOOL, Commanding forces at Buena Vista, Mexico.

The Indianians at Buena Vista.

Surgeon Chamberlain relates the following incident of the battle field. "During the retreat of the Indianians, General Taylor rode up to their rear, and thus addressed them: "Men—soldiers—fellow-countrymen, I fought for you and your country before you were born. I fought for you when you were boys. I have fought for you since you were men. Now I want you to fight a little for me; will you do it?"

"Hurrah for old Zach! Turn out! To the death for old Zach!" was shouted by more than two hundred of the brave fellows (for such they subsequently proved themselves) who immediately rallied under an officer, and fought during the rest of the engagement."

Death of Captain Taggart.

This officer belonged to one of the Indiana regiments, and was killed at Buena Vista. In handing his sword to a friend, he uttered the noble exclamation;—"Tell the boys to fight on—our cause is just." The name of such a man, with his dying sentiments, should be inscribed upon freedom's banner, and carried in the van of conflict through all time. There is a self-poised and self-balanced grandeur in a nature which, under the awful circumstances of exhaustion, death, and the savage roar of battle, can utter a sentence like this, that will appeal to the hearts of men, and fill them with molten fire. The history of mankind scarcely affords an equal instance of such utter abnegation of self at such a time. Pain, and memory, and the black shadows of death, were banished from the heart of this heroic man, that in an instant's space the whole merits of the cause in which he had laid down his life might be examined, and that searching flash of intelligence which, like the lightning, laid bare all that before was obscure, enforced the conviction uttered with his dying breath. To such a spirit, so unselfish, single and lofty, this was all the consolation desired. To God he left the rest—and who will say he did not do well? Little it concerned that champion of freedom, at that moment, what the living might say of him, scarcely expecting, perhaps, more than a local and transient remembrance. But man-

kind it does concern, that the dying sentiments and the dying convictions, as well as the name of so pure a patriot, should not be buried in oblivion.

The night after the Battle of Buena Vista.

The night of the 23d of February last, was one of most intense anxiety to the participators in the bloody fight of Buena Vista. After twelve hours of obstinate fighting, with the final result yet unknown, nothing but water having passed the lips of those gallant men for the last twelve hours, the flower of their respective corps dead or wounded, and the certainty of a renewal of the onslaught the next day, it is hard to imagine a period more calculated to "try men's souls" than that night. After the cessation of the fight, came the lassitude superinduced by the extraordinary excitement of the day; men fell exhausted, and bivouacked in line—"the weary to rest and the wounded to die." The depression of physical energy was so great that neither hunger nor danger could incite them; that bloody field was at eight o'clock as silent as the grave. It can hardly be surmised what were the feelings of that "great old man" upon contemplating the results of that day's work. No officer sought repose, and the camp fires, which on other occasions had been the scene of jest and merriment, were now still, and the deep anxiety depicted on the faces of the various groups of officers impressed you with a solemnity, foreboding ill, that was truly painful. All eyes were turned ever and anon to the tent of one upon whom all their hopes were placed, but not a light, not a movement could be discerned. The occasion made that single tent an object of intense solicitude. Some wondered if he was alone; others would have given their earthly wealth to have known the thoughts, the hopes, the wishes, the intentions of the old hero; but all was dark and silent as the tomb. Captain L——, of the topographical engineers, had visited the battle ground at night. He had made some discoveries he thought important to be communicated immediately to the commander-in-chief. On approaching the General's quarters, he overtook his servant, who had been attending to his master's *cavalry*, and inquired

if the "old man" was alone and awake. "*I spec he fast asleep, captin, for he eat a monstrous hearty supper, and when he eat a big supper he sleep berry hard and sound, and I recon you won't see de 'old hos' 'fore 4 o'clock in de mornin.'* Listen, you hear him snore clean out here." When the captain made a report of this last reconnoissance, joy and satisfaction were diffused through the camp. They knew that all was safe.

Spanish Opinions of the War.

We find an interesting notice of the Mexican war in the Madrid (Spanish) Herald of May 3d, a translation of which is inserted. The article is solemn, dignified and remarkably temperate, both in style and sentiment.

"The news from Mexico is every day more alarming—the progress of the invaders each day more rapid—the demoralization of the country each day more profound. We have before us the official account of the battle of Saltillo, which with reason we considered, from the first, as a very doubtful victory on the side of the Mexicans. The truth is, that although they succeeded in destroying a great part of the invading army, it was at the cost of immense losses, and the rout of the Anglo-Americans was not complete, inasmuch as they took many prisoners, and Santa Anna was obliged to retire precipitately, as far as San Luis de Potosi.

But this is not the worst. Whilst the republic is deprived of all kinds of resources—whilst its principal army is reduced to a state of impotency—the Anglo-Americans have disembarked twelve thousand men within three miles of Vera Cruz, without meeting with the least resistance, and have formally commenced the siege of this town, and the important fortress of San Juan de Ulloa.

This place, attacked by sea and land, badly defended by a sparse garrison, which has few resources, the aqueducts which convey to them the most important element of life already cut off, it will be a prodigy if it shall have been able to resist, even for a few weeks, the energetic attacks of its enemies. It is probable that San Juan de

Ulloa is now in the power of the Anglo-Americans, and in their power, this place will be impregnable.

What we announced a few days ago, then, now commences to be realized. The Mexican nationality is in the agonies of dissolution. In a few years the empire of Montezuma, the brilliant conquest of Hernan Cortes, will be the patrimony of the Anglo-Saxon, whose tireless industry will quickly absorb the Spanish race that now inhabit it. The country will doubtless be happier and more enlightened; but this is to us a humiliating consideration, which the love we bear to our country, and the race to which we belong, make it unlawful for us to touch upon."

Doniphan's Expedition.

Yesterday (says the New Orleans Delta, June 22d,) we had the pleasure of an introduction to one of the officers of Colonel Doniphan's regiment, whose martial exploits, and indefatigable marches, form laudatory themes for every tongue. We found him unaffectedly frank, possessing an earnest energy, which is no doubt characteristic of the whole regiment of those western braves.

This gentleman furnished the editor with the following incidents connected with that famous expedition.

In the course of the march certain circumstances occurred, which the men translated into certain auguries of success, whatever might be the perils they should have to encounter, and this opinion may have had some influence in forming the indomitable spirit they subsequently evinced. One of these omens he related. At one time, during the march, both men and cattle were almost overcome with thirst, and no water could be had within a distance of sixteen or eighteen miles of them. To travel so far was impossible, for the oxen fell down under the wagons, unable any longer to hold out against the parching thirst which was choking them. Just at the time, and without a single indication in the heavens of its approach, the rain came pouring down in torrents, and continued till the oxen could drink from the earth around them where they lay, and where they had fallen from sheer want of it.

Flying Artillery.

By the way, it may sound something like a misnomer, but still it is no less the fact, that the flying artillery of the expedition had no other agency of transportation either in the battle or out of it, than *oxen*, not the swiftest messengers of Mars, it must be admitted; worse than Mrs. Bardell's slow coach, by a long odds.

The Black Flag.

In one instance, in the presence of some American officers, the British consul was very eloquent in his eulogies of the Mexicans. They were a most brave, enlightened and a particularly magnanimous and humane people, who, in their engagements with an enemy, scrupulously observed the rules of war, and that forbearance to a vanquished foe, dictated by the more enlightened ethics of the present day.

"Are you done now, stranger?" said the captain of a company raised in the western part of Missouri, when he thought he had heard him out.

"I am done," said the consul; "I will however add, that my statement is unanswerable."

"Well, if this here don't answer you," said the young volunteer, "Tom Benton himself could not stump you!" and he held up the black flag which the enemy unfurled before going into the battle of Sacramento, which showed the murderous designs of the Mexicans. The representative of Queen Victoria said nothing, though he evidently thought there was *something* in the emblematic eloquence of the Missourian.

The following letter will convey an idea of the nature of the Mexican "*accommodations*," and of the hardships experienced by the gallant men, who risk their lives in obedience to a sense of duty.

CITY OF CHIHUAHUA, March 7, 1847.

DEAR MAJOR:—How often have I again and again determined to send you my hearty curses of every thing Mexican; but then I knew that you had seen the sterile and miserable country, and its description would be, of course, no novelty to you. To give you, however, a brief outline of our movements, I have to say, that we have marched to Santa Fe by Bent's Fort; thence through the country of the Navajo Indians to the waters of the Pacific ocean; down the St. Juan river, the Rio Colorado, and the Gila, back again to the Rio del Norte; across the Jornada del Muerto to Brazito, where we fought the battle of which you have doubtless seen the account; thence to the town of El Paso del Norte, which was taken by us; thence across two other jornadas, and fought the battle of the Sacramento, and have sent you, herewith, a copy of my official report of the same. We are now in the beautiful city of Chihuahua, and myself in the palace of Governor Frias.

My orders are to report to General Wool, but I now learn that instead of taking the city of Chihuahua, he is shut up at Saltillo, by Santa Anna. Our position will be ticklish if Santa Anna should compel Generals Taylor and Wool ever to fall back. All Durango, Zacatecas, and Chihuahua will be down upon my little army. We are out of the reach of help, and it is as unsafe to go backward as forward. High spirits and a bold front is perhaps the best and safest policy. My men are rough, ragged, and ready, having one more of the Rs than General Taylor himself. We have been in service nine months, and my men, after marching two thousand miles, over mountains and deserts, have not received one dollar of their pay, yet they stand it without murmuring. Half rations, hard marches, and no clothes!—but they are still game to the last, and curse and praise their country by turns, but fight for her all the time.

No troops could have behaved more gallantly than ours in the battle of the Sacramento. When we approached the enemy, their numbers and position would have deterred any troops, less brave and determined, from the attack; but as I rode from rank to rank, I could see nothing but the stern resolve to conquer or die—there was no trepidation, and no pale faces. I cannot discriminate between companies or individuals; all have done their duty, and done it

nobly. Lafayette has sent out a host of gallant spirits ; the whole company behaved nobly. Your nephew, Lieutenant Robert Barnett, (Lafayette volunteers) was in Captain Reid's cavalry company, in the most dangerous charge that was made during the battle. Captain May's charge at Resaca de la Palma, was not bolder or better executed.

Robert (your nephew) is a gallant and high tempered boy, and feels himself privileged to praise and to blame his commanders, as may best suit his fancy for the time. Lieutenant Desha Graves, (Lafayette volunteers) is also a very gallant man. Indeed, it is a fine company ; not better than my others, but it is great praise to say that it is equal to the best. I regret most deeply the death of poor Kirkpatrick. He was in Reid's charge, and fought like a lion.

Colonel Samuel C. Owens lost his life by excessive bravery or rather rashness. He rode up to a redoubt filled with armed men, and continued to fire his pistols into it until himself and his horse fell, pierced with balls upon its very brink.

When we are to leave here—where we are to go, or what is to become of us, you will be enabled to conjecture more correctly by the time this letter shall have reached you, then I can at this time.

Give my best respects to C. French, Esq., Judge Ryland, Colonel Wood, Judge H. Young, &c. &c., and for yourself I send the assurances of my earnest prayer for your continued prosperity, and also for my own speedy reunion with my family and friends in Missouri.

Your friend, very truly,

A. W. DONIPHAN.

E. M. RYLAND.

Bombardment of Vera Cruz.

We have given a description of the siege and surrender of Vera Cruz, as gathered from the reports of the officers ; but as these are necessarily much less copious or satisfactory than accounts from private letters, we insert the following stirring narrative from

the pen of an eye witness. The interesting incidents it narrates will be a sufficient excuse for its length.

“ On the 5th day of March, 1847, while the American squadron was lying at Anton Lizardo, a norther sprang up and commenced blowing with great violence. The ships rolled and pitched and tugged at their anchors, as if striving to tear them from their hold, while the sea was white with foam. About noon General Scott's fleet of transports, destined for the reduction of Vera Cruz, came like a great white cloud, bearing down before the storm. The whole eastern horizon looked like a wall of canvass. Vessel after vessel came flying in under reduced sail, until the usually quiet harbor was crowded with them. A perfect wilderness of spars and rigging met the eye at every turn, and for five days all was bustle, activity, and excitement. Officers of the two services were visiting about from ship to ship ; drums were beating, bands of music playing, and every thing told of an approaching conflict.

On the 10th, the army were conveyed in huge surf boats from the transports to the different ships of war, which immediately got under way for Vera Cruz. During the passage down to the city, I was in the fore-top of the United States sloop of war “ Albany,” from which place I had a good view of all that occurred. It was a grand sight. The tall ships of war sailing leisurely along under their top-sails, their decks thronged in every part with dense masses of troops, whose bright muskets and bayonets were flashing in the sunbeams ; the jingling of spurs and sabers ; the bands of music playing ; the hum of the multitude rising up like the murmur of the distant ocean ; the small steamers plying about, their decks crowded with anxious spectators ; the long lines of surf boats, towing astern of the ships, ready to disembark the troops—all tended to render the scene one of the deepest interest.

About three o'clock, P. M., the armada arrived abreast of the little island of Sacrificios : where the time-worn walls and battlements of Vera Cruz, and the old grim castle of San Juan de Ulloa, with their ponderous cannon, tier upon tier, basking upon the yellow rays of the sun, burst upon our view. That embarkation was a most beautiful, nay a sublime sight. I still retained my position in the

fore-top, and was watching every movement with the most anxious interest; for it was thought by many that the enemy would oppose the landing of our troops. About four o'clock the huge surf boats, each capable of containing one hundred men, were hauled to the gangways of the different men of war, and quickly laden, and formed in a single line nearly a mile in length. At a given signal they commenced slowly moving toward the Mexican shore. It was a grand spectacle. On, on went the long range of boats, loaded down to the gunwales with brave men, the rays of the slowly departing sun resting upon their uniforms, and bristling bayonets, and wrapping the far inland and fantastic mountains of Mexico in robes of gold. On they went, the measured stroke of the countless oars mingling with the hoarse dull roar of the trampling surf upon the sandy beach, and the shriek of the myriads of sea-birds soaring high in air, until the boats struck the shore, and our army began to land. At this instant the American flag was planted, and unrolling its folds, floated proudly out upon the evening breeze. The crews of the men-of-war, made the welkin ring with their fierce cheering; while a dozen bands of music at the same time, and actuated by the same impulse, struck up

“’Tis the star spangled banner! O, long may it wave,
O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.”

Early the next morning the old grim castle of San Juan de Ulloa commenced trying the range of its heavy guns, throwing Paixhan shells at the army, and continued it at intervals, for a week; but with the exception of an occasional skirmish with the lancers, they had all the fun to themselves. In the mean time our forces went quietly on with their preparation, stationing their pickets, planting their heavy mortars, landing their horses, provisions, and munitions of war, though constantly annoyed by a ceaseless fire from the Mexican batteries, which they were too busy to return.

On the 24th, Lieutenant Oliver Hazard Perry, with a zeal worthy of his illustrious father—the hero of Lake Erie—dismounted one of the waist guns of the Albany, a sixty-eight pounder, procured a number of volunteers, who, with such a leader, would have willingly charged up to the muzzles of the Mexican cannon, and taking about

forty rounds of Paixhan shells, proceeded on shore, where, after dragging his gun through the sand for three miles, he arrived at a small fortification, which the engineers had constructed, in a situation commanding the whole city of Vera Cruz. Roused by such a gallant example, the crews from each of the other ships disembarked guns, and conveyed them to the breast-work. In this they were favored by the situation of the works, which were concealed from the eyes of the Mexicans by an almost impervious chapparal; so that in a short time they completed a most formidable fortress, which was styled the naval battery.

At this time, while a constant fire of shot and shells were thrown at the army by the enemy, General Scott having quietly made all his arrangements, sent a flag of truce with a summons for the immediate surrender of Vera Cruz, and the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, together with a full assurance, that unless the demand was complied with, an attack would follow. As a matter of course, the Mexicans expecting an assault, for which they were well prepared, and not a bombardment, returned an indignant refusal, and were told that at four o'clock, P. M., they should hear further from us. In the mean time the chapparal had been cut away, disclosing the naval battery to the gaze of the astonished Mexicans, and the mortars and heavy artillery which had been planted upon the hills overlooking the city, and were ready to vomit forth their fires of death. Every person was now waiting with terrible anxiety the commencement of the fray.

About four o'clock, P. M., while the crews of the squadron were all at supper, a sudden and tremendous roar of artillery on shore, proclaimed that the battle had begun. The tea-things were left to take care of themselves, and sick and well tumbled up the ladders to the spar deck. I followed with the human tide, and soon found myself in the fore-top of the Albany, and looking around me, a sublime but terrific sight, my elevated perch presented to the view. Some two hundred sail of vessels were lying immediately around us, their tops, cross-trees, yards, shrouds—every thing where a foothold could be obtained—crowded with human beings, clustered like swarming bees in midsummer, all intently watching the battle. I turned my eyes on shore. *Jonathan* had at last awakened, from

his slumber, and had set to work in earnest. Bombshells were flying into Vera Cruz like hail-stones. Sulphureous flashes, clouds of smoke, and the dull boom of the heavy guns arose from the walls of the city, in return; while ever and anon, a red sheet of flame would leap from the great brass mortars of the castle, followed by a report which fairly made the earth tremble. The large ships of the squadron could not approach near enough to the shore to participate in the attack upon the city, without exposing themselves to the fire of the castle; but all the gun boats, small steamers, and every thing that *could* be brought to bear upon the enemy were sent in, and commenced blazing away—a steady stream of fire like the red glare of a volcano. This state of things continued until sunset, when the small vessels were called off; but the mortars kept throwing shells into the devoted town the whole night. I watched them until after midnight, and it was one of the most striking displays that I ever beheld.

A huge black cloud of smoke hung like a pall over the American army, completely concealing it from view; the Mexicans had ceased firing in order to prevent our troops from directing their guns by the flashes from the walls; but the bombardiers had obtained the exact range before dark and kept thundering away, every shell falling directly into the city. Suddenly a vivid lightning-like flash would gleam for an instant upon the dense cloud of smoke over our lines, and then, as the roar of the great mortar was borne to our ears, the ponderous shell would be seen to dart upward like a meteor, and after describing a semicircle in the air, descend with a loud crash upon the house-tops or into the resounding streets. Then after a brief, but awful moment of suspense, a lurid glare, illuminating for an instant the white domes and grim fortresses of Vera Cruz, falling into ruins with the shock, and the echoing crash that came borne to our ears, told that the shell had exploded, and executed its terrible mission. Throughout the whole night these fearful missiles were travelling into the city, in one continued stream; but the enemy did not return the fire until daylight, when their batteries reopened with the most determined bravery.

About eight o'clock, A. M., Perry and his brave associates, having finished the mounting of their guns, and completed all other arrange-

ments, opened with a tremendous roar the naval battery, upon the west side of the city, and were immediately answered from four distinct batteries of the enemy. The firm earth trembled beneath the discharge of these ponderous guns; the shot flew like hail into the town, and was returned with interest by the Mexicans. Their heavy guns were served with wonderful precision, almost every shot striking the fort, bursting open the sand bags of which it was constructed, and covering men and officers with a cloud of dust. Many shot and shell were thrown directly through the embrasures, and to use the expression of one of our old tars who had been in several engagements, 'The red-skins handled their long thirty-twos, as if they had been rifles.' One officer and several of our men had fallen, but the remainder of the brave fellows kept blazing away, until the forts and ramparts of the city began to crumble to the earth. This state of things lasted to the 27th, the army throwing a constant shower of bombs into the city, and the naval battery (manned daily by fresh officers and men) beating down the fortifications and destroying every thing within its range, when a flag of truce was sent out with an offer of the unconditional surrender of the city of Vera Cruz, and castle of San Juan de Ulloa.'

The Capitulation.

"It was a clear bright sunny day on which the surrender took place. By special good fortune, the author of this sketch obtained an opportunity of being present at the capitulation, and a most splendid and glorious pageant it was. The boat in which we embarked put off from the ship about eight o'clock, A. M., and after a long pull through the fleet of transports, we landed on a white level sand beach, about three miles to the southward of Vera Cruz. Here we found the encampment of the volunteers; and after straying around among the tents, filled with a ragged and motley assembly, and seeking in vain for horses at the markees of the different quartermasters, we started off for the 'Field of the grounded arms.'

After crossing the sand hills, which rise from the beach, we came

suddenly upon the stage of the *theatre of war*. Cannon balls were lying over all the plain, like corn upon the thresher's floor, while here and there might be descried vast caverns ploughed in the earth by the shells from the castle. Columns of troops were moving about in every direction ; general and staff officers galloping around the field on their spirited chargers ; drums were beating, trumpets braying, bands of music playing, and the star-spangled banner floating gaily on the breeze. It was a moment to make one proud of his country. After a fatiguing walk we came to a long level plain, green with verdure, extending for more than a mile, where the Mexicans were to lay down their arms. Having secured a spot where we had a fine view of the whole field, and while congratulating ourselves on our good fortune, one of General Scott's aids came galloping over the field on his panting steed, and shouted—

Gentlemen, the General directs that this place shall be kept clear. 'The Mexicans are to march out here ; so you will perceive the necessity of seeking other quarters.'

There was no help for it. Our party separated, each taking up the position that pleased him. An officer of the army who happened to be off duty at the time, and who had in his possession an excellent telescope went with me to the top of a high hill, which commanded a view of the whole field, and where a thick chapparal through whose branches the cool luxuriant winds came singing, spread its grateful shade above our heads, as we reclined upon the soft carpet-like earth, and gazed upon the magnificent view before us. 'There lay the sandy plains, dotted with the white tents of the soldiers ; the green field on which the enemy was to pile his arms, the shattered walls, ramparts and white domes of the city, the time-worn battlements of the castle, over which the half-masted flag of Mexico was trailing in sadness ; and beyond, the great, solemn, sleeping sea, on whose unruffled bosom the countless fleet of transports, men-of-war, and steamers, as the long glassy surge came sweeping in, rolled lazily to and fro, with their wilderness of spars and rigging, basking in the yellow sunshine. It was a most beautiful sight, and one that can never be effaced from my memory.

About ten o'clock A. M. the American army moved up in two columns—a perfect forest of glittering bayonets—the regular troops

on the right and the volunteers on the left, enclosing the extended field in a hollow square, with an opening nearest the city, through which the Mexicans were to enter. In a short time the sound of mournful music announced that the enemy was approaching; and looking toward the city we beheld his columns moving out in good order, and in the direction of our army.

On they came, the poor, crest-fallen, half-starved, emaciated creatures, marching to the most mournful strains ear ever heard; the long dejected looking files of troops, accompanied by the inhabitants of the city—women and children, the old, the young, the crippled—all bearing off their little treasures. Some were seen staggering under the weight of old trunks, others loaded down with bags of meal—no doubt their little all. I need not say that I sincerely sympathized with them in their deep distress; and as I looked around upon many poor pale sorrowing faces of the females, my heart ached for them, and I involuntarily breathed forth a curse upon the inventor of *war*.

After the soldiers had stacked their arms, and while they were waiting to be paroled, I came down from the hill where I had been seated, and strolling around among the columns of Mexicans, was surprised to find so many fine looking men and officers among them. They had the appearance of being well disciplined, and their arms and accoutrements were in a most excellent condition. Although I was entirely alone and wore the uniform of the navy, not an insult was offered to me; and whenever I thought proper to salute one of their officers, the civility was always promptly and courteously acknowledged.

On I went in a spirit of wild recklessness, stopping to exchange an occasional smile or kind word with the pretty *senoritas*, with their large dark languishing eyes, raven tresses hanging down almost to the earth, and with their swelling bosoms more than half disclosed to view. Suddenly looking up, I for the first time discovered that I had left our army, and all assistance far behind, and that I was alone in the very midst of the armed and swarthy hordes of the enemy, and directly before the principal gate of the city. To add to my uneasiness, I perceived many dark and threatening glances cast toward me from the sullen column of soldiers; and I have no doubt,

that had they not been restrained by a fear of their officers, they would have sacrificed me on the spot to gratify their thirst for revenge. But let me feel as I would, it was no time to show indecision ; so I walked quietly along the walls, examining the loop-holes for musketry, and speculating in my own mind, whether some one of the enemy might not lie concealed behind them as at Monterey, and take a fancy to make a target of me. I can testify from personal experience, that the spot on which I stood at that time, was *not* a bed of roses. Had I been made the victim of some deadly marksman, who, at *such* a time, could ever have ferreted out the assassin ?

Just at this moment, to my great relief, Mr. Crossan, a very brave and accomplished officer, accompanied by three others, came up, having like me wandered on in advance of the army. After a brief consultation, it was decided to go on at all hazards. Accordingly we crossed the old bridge, and after passing over a ponderous arched gate-way, found ourselves in the almost deserted streets. We were the first Americans that entered Vera Cruz.

What a scene of distress and desolation met the eye at every turn ! For nearly a week the American army had rained a ceaseless shower of bombs into the ill-fated city, and not a street, and scarcely a house, remained unvisited by these terrible missiles. The pavements ploughed up, beautiful dwellings shattered into masses of ruins, signs of every description broken in pieces, and fragments of shells lying around in every direction—these told of the havoc which had been made with our enemies. The few people who remained in the city, seemed completely cowed down, and beaten out with constant fatigue, anxiety, and want of sleep ; and as we passed along the echoing streets, they looked out of their broken windows timidly upon us, as if expecting insult and violence. For myself I sincerely sympathized with them in their poignant distress ; and even had I possessed the power, I would not for the universe have injured one of the poor pale faced creatures of that many sorrowed throng. There is something in deep distress which claims a kindred feeling in the breast of humanity.

I soon separated from the rest of the party, and wandered alone over the entire city. During the whole of my peregrinations, I was treated with the greatest respect and kindness ; and whenever I

stopped before a house to gaze upon the damage done by a shell, some of the inmates, if the building was not deserted, would come to the shattered door, invite me to enter, point out their furniture destroyed, or the time-worn walls stained with the life blood of a father or a mother, a sister or a brother.

Nor was it the Mexicans alone that suffered. 'The foreign residents of the town not expecting a bombardment, but an assault from our army, had remained at their residences ; and, to use the phrase of the indignant British consul, ' were caught like so many rats in a trap.' That gentleman informed me that for a whole week, he had not taken off his clothes, and had scarcely slept a moment during the whole of the bombardment. ' Whenever,' said he, ' a person *did* lie down to obtain a little rest, it was with the comforting thought that in all human probability, a great bombshell would come down through the roof of the house, and take up its quarters by his side as a bed-fellow.' He went on to say that during the second night of the bombardment, he collected together quite a large party of his friends, if I remember rightly some twenty in number, ladies and gentlemen, who took refuge in the parlor of a large stone house, which being very strong was thought to be tolerably safe against the incursion of the shells, though they could be heard crashing into the city like a hail-storm. But while the party were congratulating themselves upon their probable security, they heard a dreadful crash upon the roof of the house, which made its firm walls tremble, and in an instant the terrible missile landed directly in the centre of the room, and exploding with a blinding glare and deafening noise, shattered down the building, and destroyed twelve of the unfortunate inmates. In fact *no* place was safe ; the palace of the grandee, and the hut of the wretched peasant, shared one common fate.

In the afternoon I visited the hospital where the wounded were lying ; some of them in the last mortal agonies, some with their arms blown off, others with their legs broken, and all horribly mutilated. The old, the young, the rich, the poor, male and female, had been gathered in from all parts of the city, to this vast receptacle of pain and suffering. Heart rending moans arose from every quarter of the building, and clouds of flies almost darkened the air—I turned in horror from the sickening sight.

Before night the town was filled with our troops, who kept pouring in, regiments at a time ; and a constant stream of baggage wagons were entering at the different gates, from the scene of the capitulation, loaded with the arms and accoutrements of the vanquished enemy. As the vehicles passed me rattling over the ruined pavements, with their glittering freights, on their way to deposit them for safe keeping in the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, I could not but think of Longfellow's beautiful and truthful lines.

'Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies ?

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals nor forts.

Sierra Gordo.

The following incidents concerning the battle of Sierra Gordo are taken from the New Orleans Delta.

The Generosity of our Soldiers.—'The kindness of our men to the wounded of the enemy was as conspicuous as their fortitude under suffering. After the battle was over they could be seen on every side lifting the poor fellows into easier positions, supplying them with water, and binding up their wounds. Sturdy fellows, who a few minutes before were charging against the enemy with the most destructive fury and savage determination, were now transformed by victory into kind nurses, who watched over and assisted their wounded enemies with the most tender care and solicitude. The circumstances too, were not calculated to arouse very kindly feelings on the part of our men. The cowardly advantage taken by the enemy in raising the white flag after they had killed so many of our men from their secure defences, and just at the time when a bloody vengeance was to be taken for the severe loss we had incurred, caused an almost irrepressible excitement and hatred in the bosoms of our men. They could scarcely be kept off until the enemy were

disarmed, and then they were perfectly safe. American soldiers, resolute and irresistible against an armed foe, would not raise their hands against one unarmed and defenceless.

Major Sumner.—Major Sumner, who led the rifles in the attack of the 17th on the enemy's advanced position, made a very narrow escape. In the charge, he was struck on the head by a musket ball. The bullet was flattened to the thickness of a dime, and retained on its surface the print of the major's hair, and yet, strange to say, excepting the severance of an artery, he sustained no serious injury. The artery was taken up, and at the last accounts the major was doing well. This excellent officer—accounted one of the best tacticians and disciplinarians in the army—may certainly felicitate himself on the strength of his craniological defences. He will never find any difficulty in getting a liberal policy in any of our life insurance offices.

The Soldiers of Vera Cruz.—The defenders of Vera Cruz, who were released on their parole, are viewed in a very unfavorable light by the Mexican government. Morales, Landero, and other of the officers who were in command at Vera Cruz, have been arrested for cowardice, and sent to Guanajuato, to be imprisoned and tried. Morales is especially charged with exhibiting feelings of friendship for the United States, and with having declared publicly, in Jalapa and elsewhere, that it was vain to resist the Americans; that they were better guardians of the happiness of Mexico than her own rulers. He advised the ladies of Jalapa to remain in town, and assured them and the people generally, that they would suffer no harm or outrage from the Americans. We sincerely hope this assurance of our gallant enemy will be fully justified by the conduct of our troops. Thus far, General Scott, we understand, has succeeded in maintaining excellent discipline and subordination in his large force. No robberies, no devastation or outrages of any sort have marked the course of his army. The houses on the roadside were left undisturbed, the cattle and provisions of the poor farmers, the little stock of merchandize in the stores—even the decanters in the grog shops, on the return of the owners—who fled at the approach of the army—were found just as they were left, with the single exception that a few of the decanters were emptied.

The dead of the enemy at the battle of Sierra Gordo were unstripped and undisturbed by our men. The private property, money, jewelry, etc. of the officers, were all delivered over to the pay department, to be sent to the friends of the deceased officers. There was not a single case of robbery complained of by any of the prisoners. It was whispered among the soldiers that in removing Santa Anna's specie chests into our camp, one of them *accidentally* fell rather violently on a rock, and a few castings rolled out; whether they were ever picked up, or if picked up, if they ever got back into Santa Anna's pocket, was never ascertained nor particularly inquired into.

The Mexicans are favorably impressed towards General Scott, who has treated them with great kindness, and manifested a respect for their religion and their customs, from which very beneficial results will no doubt be experienced.

No prospect of Peace.—There is no reason however to believe that the victory of Sierra Gordo will bring us any nearer to a peace than we were before. The war is not unpopular with the mass of the Mexicans. They have suffered none of its horrors. Besides, the controlling spirits of the country keep up the war spirit, knowing that if the country is occupied by the United States, they will lose their offices and their influence. It is believed by General Scott and the officers with him, that it will be necessary to occupy the whole country. This he thinks can be easily done. With twenty thousand men he will march to the capital, take possession of the government, disarm the people, establish a Provisional Government under the authority of the United States, and defray its expenses from the customs and mines, the chief source of revenue in Mexico. Without this force General Scott will not be able to move with safety to his communications beyond Jalapa. He will have to occupy the Orizaba road, to prevent the enemy operating against his rear from that position. Having arrived in the *Terra Templada*, and encamped in a perfectly healthy position, he will no doubt wait for reinforcements before he pushes farther at least than Perote, the next point of attack.

A letter from Colonel Davenport, governor of Matamoras, dated June 6th, 1847, gives some interesting information concerning the

nature of the country, and the leading pursuits of the inhabitants round that place. The following are extracts.*

“The country is of but little value for agricultural purposes, for lack of rain. Irrigation is necessary for all kinds of cultivation, and it may be well doubted whether a large plantation could be advantageously managed in this way, as on the Mississippi, where the water is much higher than the land. The country is well adapted to grazing, yet flocks occasionally suffer much for water and pasturage in dry seasons. These however are large, and there are always enough left for use. They trust to fortune to meet these contingencies, but should she prove a little more fickle than she is, I cannot see what alternative would be left, short of fleeing the country, or drawing supplies from abroad, which I apprehend but few could afford to do. The herding and attendance on the flocks, I believe to be the chief business of the country, and the people are well adapted to this business. Perhaps one-fourth of the population find employment, about a herding, feudal establishment; in attending flocks, waiting in the houses, cultivating on a small scale, and in attending their master on his journeys as escorts to defend him against robbers. For the herding business, it may be imagined a settlement in a crowded neighborhood would not be preferred. The Mexicans choose a situation as other people would, adapted to the occupation they have in view. The point fixed, whatever business may be in view, a small store is added, if practicable, as a valuable auxiliary to the undertaking; servants are of course needed to carry on the enterprise, and they are easily procured by a sort of civil contract. A certain class of the Mexicans, who have no aspirations above servitude, go in debt to a small amount, perhaps fifty dollars, in the store, or otherwise, as it may happen, and go to work it out, at, say four dollars per month, feeding and clothing themselves. This they can hardly do for less than their wages; they therefore never pay the debt, nor regain their liberty. There may be other modes for making slaves in this country, but they have not been sufficiently defined to me to speak of them. The cost of a good field hand in one of our southern states, would purchase about fifteen of these *peons*, or servants as they are now

* This letter has never appeared in print.

commonly called. Slaves other than these, introduced into this country, would be so much capital sunk. The Wilmot proviso is altogether needless. Slavery, like the currency, is regulated much better by the business of the country, than by legislation; and when labor will not pay the cost of it, then it will hardly be found. The chief house of the establishment is of course occupied by the conductor of the concern, surrounded by others of a more humble pretension, in which reside the peons, or servants as they are more generally called, it being a term less grating to the ears, [*than slave.*] They are also called *ranchero*, the establishment being a *ranch*o. I need not tell you that they are considered a great set of rogues, by those who know them best, none permitting an opportunity to plunder to escape them, not excepting their own people. Education has evidently advanced but little among them. The number who can read and write merely, I judge to be much less than the number which have not reached that standard. Their governors have but little interest in the improvement of their understandings. In this state of things schools cannot easily accomplish the object of their erection. Speaking no language but their own, which but few read, they are in no condition to be improved by association with foreigners, who, indeed, being adventurers, have less motive in instructing them than their rulers. Scattered as they are over a vast region, employed in pursuits not favorable to education, it may be imagined that their capacity for learning has hardly been tasked. In the same condition, I believe, any other people would be equally benighted. I have not been much about, but I have supposed their dwellings in the interior, not much unlike those in the skirts of this town, which will not lose by a comparison with the wigwams you have seen on the Saint Peter, [*river.*] Their wants, it would seem, have not much increased since the days of their forefathers.

Honesty should not be expected from a people in vassalage, as these are, but roguery is not confined to this order. They have long been without any fixed government, and reason with them is not strong enough to control the bad passions. Those placed in authority rob the wealthy upon the pretext that it is *for the good of the nation*, and upon the same plea I suppose the system is carried to the lowest order. except only those who have nothing at all.

This plan plainly paralyzes every motive to honest enterprise, and will in the end, beggar every people who pursue it. From this condition of things they have no relief short of a strong government, guarantied to prevent its overthrow, which will be faithful to the people, and have no object in its measures but the welfare of the nation. Then indeed they will be favored beyond every nation, who have not such a government.

Pronunciation of Mexican Names.

To the general reader, the long foreign names which form part and parcel of every history of the present war, are a source of no little annoyance. In order to remedy this in some measure, we copy the following table from the *Cincinnati Commercial*, merely remarking that both the orthography and pronunciation are *Mexican* and not pure *Spanish*, it being remembered that all the Spanish colonies have corrupted the classic pronunciation of the mother tongue.

Names.	Pronunciation.	Definition.
La Resaca de la	Lah Ray-sah'-kah	
Palma	day lah Pal'-mah	<i>Surf palm</i>
Palo Alto	Pah-lo Ahl'-to	<i>Tall Tree</i>
Santiago	San-te-ah'-go	<i>St. James</i>
Rio del Norte	Ree-o del Nor'-tay	<i>North River</i>
Chapparra	Chah-pahr'-rah	<i>Small bush</i>
Chaparral	Chah-pahr-rah'	<i>Clump of bushes</i>
Ranchero	Rahn-chay'-ro	<i>One who labors on a rancho</i>
Rancho	Rahn'-cho	<i>Small farm</i>
Hacienda	Hah-ce-en'-dha	<i>Plantation</i>
Pelon	Pay-lone'	<i>(Greaser) one of the rabble</i>
Monterey	Mon-ta-ray'	<i>The King of the mountain</i>
Plaza	Plah'-sah	<i>Public square</i>
Rinconado	Rin-co-nah'-dho	<i>Inside corner</i>

Names.	Pronunciation.	Definition.
Los Muertos	Lohs Mwer'-tohs	<i>Land of the dead</i>
Saltillo	Sawl-te'-yo	<i>Side hill or fall of table land</i>
Buena Vista	Bwey'-na Vees'-tah	<i>Pleasant view</i>
Las Lucantadas	Lahs In-can-tah'-dhas	<i>Enchanted ground</i>
China	Chee'-nah	
Estanque	Es-tahn'-ke	<i>Artificial pond of water</i>
Agua	Ag'-wah	<i>Water</i>
Novia	No'-vee-ah	<i>Well, (the water of which is drawn out by machinery)</i>
Agua Nueva	Ag'-wah New-ay'-vah	<i>New Water</i>
San Luis Potosi	San Lew-is' Poto'-see	
Lobos, (Island)	Lo'-bus	<i>Wolf</i>
Cerralvo	Sa-rehl'-vo	
Sierra	See-er'-rah	<i>Mountain ridge</i>
San Juan de Ulua	San Whahn da Oo-loo'-ah	
Vera Cruz	Vay'-rah Crooz	<i>True Cross</i>
Alvarado	Alvah-rah'-dho	
Anton Lizardo	An-ton' Lee-zar'-dho	<i>Lizard Point</i>
Jalapa	Hah-lah'-pah	<i>Jalap</i>
Mexico	May-hee'-co	
Sacrificios	Sac-ree-feese'-ohs	<i>Place of Sacrifice</i>
Bonita	Bo-nee'-tah	<i>Pretty</i>
La Vega	Lay Vay'-gah	
Ampudia	Am-poo'-dhe-ah	
Mejia	May-hee'-ah	
Canales	Cah-nah'-les	
Paredes	Pah-ray'-dhes	
Gomez Farias	Go'-mez Fa-ree'-ass	

John R. Vinton, Brevet Major, U. S. Army.

We cannot think upon the fate of this able officer, without feelings of the most painful melancholy. He was one of the few to whom Nature had given the finest talents, the noblest traits of heart and character. His gentlemanly demeanor, his genuine affection for all, his fearlessness in danger, and his great learning endeared him to all.

In early life he was placed at school, where he made rapid advances, and soon entered West Point Academy. Here he was spoken of by his instructors as unrivalled in genius, acquirements and high tone of moral character. At seventeen he received a commission, and was employed for some years on topographical duty on the Atlantic coast, and in Canada. He then entered as adjutant at the school of practice, under General Eustis, and gave entire satisfaction. Subsequently he became aid to General Brown, and was employed by government, in especial duties, during the performance of which he prepared some papers, which were so much admired in Congress, that in a leading speech in favor of the Military Academy, he was referred to as an instance of the kind of men that the system of that institution could produce.

He served with distinction in the Seminole War, and was present at the battle near Lake Monroe. This was his first experience of actual war, and yet he was praised by his companions and officers, for having conducted himself like a veteran. He was subsequently in Rhode Island, his native state, during the troubles of Governor Dorr, at which time he performed considerable service for government.

At Monterey he was with General Worth's division, and accompanied the troops as they passed so long under fire from the two heights, in the storming of those heights, the capture of the palace, and in the subsequent street assault, where the soldiers dug through walls of houses, amid a continual pour of musketry from the house-tops. In the storming of the second hill, he led a battalion on one side of the hill, while Colonel Childs commanded on the other, and after forcing the way over rocks and brambles, amid showers of balls, he drove the enemy from the top at the point of the bayonet, forcing them to retreat to the Bishop's Palace.

The part he enacted in the capture of the palace, was so brilliant that we subjoin a description of it from the pen of an officer,* who served under him at the time.

“I found him in command of the advance, and he then told me that his plan was to try to draw the enemy from their position in and near the palace, and when they were fairly out, to rise and charge them vigorously, and if possible, to get possession of the palace. The advance was covered as much as possible behind the rocks, to protect them from the dreadful shower of grape and musketry, which the enemy kept up from their defences. I asked him if we should advance or fire. He told me that I might advance if I did not expose my men too much, and that he wished me to fall back whenever I saw the enemy coming out, until we were upon his line of ambush, and then to close on him and rush on them. It was a well conceived plan, and the result showed that it was well executed. The enemy were induced to come out and charge, and as they came up the hill, Captain Vinton shouted, ‘Now my men, close and drive them.’ They closed to centre, delivered their fire, and with charged bayonets rushed on the Mexicans. The latter were thunderstruck, and after a moment’s stand, broke and fled. Our men were in the palace and fort before they all escaped, and in ten minutes their own guns were turned upon them. It was a stirring, thrilling scene, and I cannot do it justice, for it should have been seen, to be felt. Captain Vinton derived all the credit which his position enabled him to obtain, and I shall always be of the opinion that his plan was an admirable one.”

After some time spent at Monterey, and Saltillo, Captain Vinton was ordered with the greater part of the regulars to join General Scott in the attack on Vera Cruz. When the landing took place, he was among those of the first line, and received a conspicuous and important command, in a situation which greatly exposed him to the enemy, and was open to an attack at any moment. When the batteries commenced he was called to a still more honorable post—that of field and commanding officer, in the line batteries and trenches. Towards evening of the 22d of March, he went upon an exposed situation to watch the effect of his shot, and the direction of that from the enemy.

* Captain Blanchard.

After remaining there for some time he came down and said to Major Martin Scott who commanded the covering party, ‘Tell the officers, Major, as you pass the mortars, that our guns are working accurately.’ He resumed his position, and almost at the same moment, a huge shell glanced from the side of the parapet, struck his head and fractured the skull. He fell dead instantly, and lay stretched on his back, with his arms folded over his breast, and his face, as an officer writes, who was present ‘retaining its habitual expression, sedate and earnest, but not harsh.’ As he fell the officers and men rushed forward and gathered about him; the shell was charged with a pound of powder and three hundred and twenty musket balls, but fortunately it did not burst. Upon his body were found letters from his children, *stained with his own blood.*

Vinton was buried in the military coat in which he fell. The funeral was attended by the general-in-chief, and all the officers who could be spared from duty, and the church service was read over him by a brother officer—a friend of many years—amid the roar of cannon, the falling of the enemy’s shot, and the whirling of sand in the fierce norther—snatched from the victory of the morrow, that his spirit might gain a greater victory over death and the grave. ‘I am overwhelmed with grief,’ says an officer writing on this subject. ‘My friend, the gallant, accomplished Vinton is no more. This sudden dispensation has spread a deep gloom throughout the whole army. I have been for several hours on a sand hill, in a crowd of perhaps a hundred officers, who were uniting their voices in lamentation. Just now, at General Scott’s tent, the general pronounced to a large circle of his staff, a most eloquent and feeling eulogium upon the deceased, that went to the heart of every listener. He spoke of his rare talents and accomplishments, and high soldiership, as placing him in the front rank of his profession. Before leaving Washington, the general recommended him for the appointment of Assistant Adjutant-General, with the view of making him chief of his staff in the field General Scott repeated, this evening, that the instantaneous surrender of the city and castle would not assuage his grief, nor compensate the country for the loss of such a son.’

Congress created him a brevet major, for his services at Monterey; but he never received the news of his appointment.

Major Vinton was one of the most learned men in the army. He graduated at West Point, and received the degree of A. M. from a college in New England. He was a master of mathematics and astronomy, skilled in metaphysics, and the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and versed in his own profession. On most of these subjects he wrote books, which received the commendation of high authority. But his favorite study was theology. It had been his intention to enter the ministry, and night after night, amid the wilds of Florida, while others were asleep, he was wrapped in solitary meditation, or in communion with his God. His mind was of a most deep and religious cast; and that reverence which he had imbibed in early life, for holy things, never forsook him; and his conduct exercised a most salutary influence upon his military companions. In Florida, his mind was peculiarly exercised. His letters of that period are full of doubts, hopes, and plannings for taking holy orders. He fears that his health would not enable him to follow a sedentary life; that selfish motives, the ties of family and friends, might hinder him; he doubts his fitness, and frequently examines himself in the most thorough, yet humble manner.

During this period he sent for his Greek and Hebrew books, and often prepared outlines of sermons. These he frequently read aloud among the rivers and forests of Florida.

The depth and tenderness of his affections are rarely surpassed. When young he married a lady of distinguished merit and beauty, who died early, leaving two daughters and a son, who are still living. In his relations, as a father and husband, he was sensitive to every impression, and gave and received exquisite pleasure in the interchanges of affection and esteem. In one letter we find an earnest plea for the paternal affection, in answer to the suggestion that it might interfere with the love and duty that we owe to the Most High. He speaks from the heart, and will not permit the natural affections to be severed from religion, and set over against the love of God. He corresponded regularly with each of his children, giving them affectionate advice often upon the holiest and most sublime topics. Amid the rude furniture of a soldier, when surrounded by armed men, some of them the coarsest developements

of life, he wrote a beautiful essay on the presence and agency of the spirits of departed friends, in which he gives his views of the subject, on scriptural grounds, and upon reasons drawn from natural reason and philosophy. A letter to his daughter contains some valuable hints on the choice of school companions ; and a second one to the same, written the night before the commencement of the siege of Monterey, shows a spirit of preparation for the duties and chances of the morrow, which could not but insure him success.

Such was Major Vinton. It is melancholy to contemplate his death. How much might the mind and talents of such a one, under proper opportunities, have done for his fellow men ; yet in a moment, before conscious of the presence of the destroyer, he was hurried from his companions, to where all distinctions are lost. Dreadful as is the shaft of war at all times, how still more dreadful is it, when the victim is the gifted, the virtuous, and the honorable.

Colonel de Russy's Official Report of the Expedition to Huejutla.

TAMPICO, MEXICO, July 18, 1847.

SIR:—In obedience to your special order No. 41, dated 7th July, directing me to call upon General Garay, of the Mexican army, stationed at Waughutla (Huejutla), and claim from him certain prisoners of war, who in your judgment, and for reasons which you authorized me to suggest, should be entitled to liberation ; and in case of his compliance, to bring back said prisoners to Tampico ; I proceeded with an escort of one hundred and twenty-six men, in its execution. My force was composed of Wyse's company third artillery, thirty-four men, with one field piece ; Boyd's company cavalry, thirty-five men ; a detachment of my own regiment of forty-four men, commanded by Captains Mace and Seguire, and eleven men of the volunteer company of Tampico rangers. The officers assigned to these troops were Captains Wyse, third artillery ; Boyd, cavalry ; Mace and Seguire, Louisiana volunteers, with Lieutenants Taneyhill, cavalry, Lindenberger, Campbell and Heimberger, Loui-

siana volunteers ; the first of these acting adjutant for the command, the two latter as company officers to Captains Mace and Seguire, and Lieutenant Wells, commanding the rangers. There was also with the party Sergeant Singleton, of Louisiana company, acting sergeant-major, and Mr. Pemberton, an amateur volunteer. I left this place with my command on the morning of the 8th instant, and reached the town of Asulwama on the 9th, which I learned was within the district commanded by General Garay. Here I inquired for any military officer to whom I might communicate the purpose of my mission ; I was informed by the alcalde (or chief magistrate) that none were there. I applied to this functionary for corn and other necessaries, which were supplied cheerfully, and informed him that my tour, although accompanied by a military escort, was not in hostility, but to claim of the commandant general some American prisoners in his custody, by the orders of Colonel Gates, commanding in Tampico, and which I trusted would be turned over to me, for reasons which I should explain. Thence I continued my journey to the next town upon the route to General Garay's headquarters, called Tantayuka, (Tantoyuca,) which we reached on the 11th. Here also, I was furnished by the alcalde with corn, beef, &c. ; again communicated the character and purposes of my mission ; and again inquired, to no purpose, for any military officer with whom I might communicate, and who might accompany me to the general's head-quarters at Waughutla, now distant about twenty-five miles. While here I perceived indications of uneasiness producing some apprehension that, notwithstanding my assurances of the pacific nature of my visit, formidable preparations of defence were being arranged before me ; but I could not suspect to meet these short of the town occupied by the commanding general, at the approach to which I relied upon the white flag, (or sooner should I meet any one to whom I might show it,) to make all right and safe. On next morning early, we moved towards Waughutla, Captain Boyd and his company being now the advanced guard, with orders not to be more than two hundred yards before us. Having reached a point eight miles from our last camp at Tantayuka, and about one mile from the river Calaboso, we met a Mexican Indian whom we interrogated in reference to the road, &c. From this

man we learned that the Mexicans had made an ambuscade at the river, that General Garay was there himself with a large force, and that it was intended to attack us there. I immediately despatched the adjutant and sergeant-major to order Captain Boyd to fall back to the main body ; it was too late ; they had no sooner started to communicate the order before a heavy discharge of musketry was heard, and many single shots after ; we hastened to the river ; Captain Boyd, with six of his men, had fallen, and the remainder of his company had dispersed or fled back to us. As I reached the ground I perceived the enemy had cleared away the ground of all bushes for the space of one hundred and fifty yards on either side the road, leaving beyond that a dense hedge of chaparral, in the rear of which had been constructed a fence to prevent charges of cavalry ; in front, upon the opposite bank, was their main body, also protected in their front by thick chaparral.

A charge was instantly made upon the right by Captain Mace and his men, another upon the left by Captain Seguire and his men, and the field piece protected by Captain Wyse's company was ordered forward to scour the ground upon the opposite bank. These movements were nearly simultaneous, and were gallantly performed ; at the first discharge the enemy were driven from the left, two charges upon the right also dislodged him from their right and compelled him to unite in one mass upon the opposite bank. In this position the battle continued for a full hour, Captain Wyse gallantly serving his piece, and being during the whole of the engagement exposed to the destructive fire from the enemy, directly in his front, so well concealed and protected by the thick undergrowth, as but seldom to be sufficiently seen to be fired upon with any perfect precision. There were wounded during the service of this piece, six men of its squad. Finally, the enemy sounded their trumpet, whether for a retreat or a charge, I do not know ; there was at all events a cessation of their fire ; at that moment Captain Wyse delivered a discharge of canister so fortunately aimed as for a time entirely to paralyze their further action. I took this opportunity to examine our condition ; we had now exhausted all our field piece cartridges but three. The road to Waughutla lay along a gorge between steep acclivities. The prisoners we knew had been removed

from the town; our rear and flanks were now attacked by multitudes of the men of the towns left behind us on our advance, who had already come so near us as to take from us all our mules, packed with every thing we had, in provisions, money and clothing. There seemed but one way to make our return possible; it was to regain, if possible, the position we had occupied in Tantayuka. I immediately ordered a retrograde; we turned and retraced our steps; immediately there fell upon our flanks and rear large bodies of the enemy, at such distance however as to make their efforts but slightly efficient. At every opportunity to reach them, our rear, commanded by Captain Mace, delivered their discharge of musketry, generally, most fatal to our pursuers. Whilst ascending a hill in the road, about one mile from Tantayuka, a very spirited resistance was made by the enemy stationed on the summit, but they were soon driven forward and dispersed by as many of Captain Wyse's men as could be spared from the piece, who were in the advance acting as light infantry. At this critical moment the piece was made again to play a very important part in the safety of our retreat, for it had scarcely reached the summit of this hill before the enemy came rushing on our rear, driving in the rear guard, pack mules and every thing else in confusion around the gun, but Captain Wyse promptly unlimbered, sighted and elevated his gun himself, and when within short musket shot he touched her off, sending death and confusion into the column of the advancing enemy, and before they could recover from this shock, he gave them another well aimed discharge of canister, which effectually prevented further attack from the rear. In this manner we advanced nine miles back to Tantayuka—the whole ground being one continued fight. When arrived at that town we found an organized force there to oppose us. Captain Seguire, then in advance, was ordered to prepare his men for a charge, and Captain Wyse advancing his piece to a favorable position, discharged upon our opposers one of our last charges of canister, and immediately thereon the charge was made; the enemy fled and dispersed in all directions.

We gained the town and immediately crossed it to a favorite mound overlooking and entirely commanding it. Thus, masters here, we had leisure to rest and restore our condition to better capabilities

of defence ; men were despatched to the stores in the town to procure powder and ball ; from which a number of cartridges were prepared, using champaign bottles half filled with balls, with the remaining space packed with earth, a substitute for tin cylinders. Other munitions were also inspected and equally distributed. These preparations being complete, we had nine or ten good canister charges and an average of nine musket cartridges per man. During this afternoon I found the men were coming to camp, some of them richly laden with spoils of all kinds from the shops and private houses ; and although I had not authorized it, I did not regret so just a retribution for the hypocrisy and treachery of people who, after affecting kindness and hospitality as we left them in the morning, had subsequently fallen upon to annihilate us, and had despoiled us of about ninety mules and all our private baggage and provisions.

While here we perceived the enemy passing round us from all directions, and moving to some point upon the road by which we had come from Asulwama. We remembered a most favorable place we had passed, for any purpose of ambuscade, called Monte Grande, at which Captain Wyse had been obliged to dismount his piece, and rightly conjectured it was intended to strike us there ; we determined, therefore, to take any other road for return, if any there was, and on leaving our position at night, the road by Panuco was selected by which to attempt to retreat. These arrangements being adopted, we were called upon at nine o'clock at night by a flag bearing to me a letter from General Garay. I informed the two officers who bore it that I did not wish to appear disrespectful to General Garay, but that I had neither lights nor conveniences for writing in the camp—that therefore, if they knew the purport of the note and would communicate it, I would send by them the reply. They said it was a demand for honorable capitulation. I answered that there was no possibility of any such result ; that I felt strong in my position, and able to move when and where I pleased. I then complained in strong terms, of the attack upon my command—more like assassination than any thing else—stating that I had repeatedly explained to the alcaldes of the towns within the district commanded by General Garay, the friendly character of my tour, and had diligently sought to see an officer of his command for an explanation and escort to him. I

understood that these officers expressed regret, saying that it was attributed to information received from Tampico by their general that I was coming to take away the prisoners by force, adding that it was probable the general would like to see and converse with me. I appointed ten o'clock as the hour I would see General Garay, and it was agreed that Captain Wyse would meet the general at that time upon the plaza, and bring them to me or assign a place for our meeting. Captain Wyse repaired at the time fixed to the place appointed, and waited until near twelve o'clock, when he returned to give the information that they had failed to meet him. We immediately prepared to depart, and at two o'clock on the morning of the 13th we left camp, during a rain, and gained the Panuco road. It was not until nine or ten o'clock of that day that the enemy, having ascertained our retreat, were again down upon our flanks and rear; we managed, however, to keep him at bay, and on more than one occasion he was made to pay the cost of his temerity, when approaching within musket or cannon range. We were thus pursued for a distance of fifty miles, after we left Tantayuka, but always at the cost of the enemy, many of whom were destroyed in their pursuit.

In the engagement at the river, which is called the Calaboso, we sustained the following loss, viz :

Boyd's Company.—Captain Boyd, killed; Lieutenant Toneyhill, mortally wounded; Sergeant Barker, killed; Corporal Bruner, killed; privates Tubiff, Brown, Mullican and Burke, killed, and privates Luxton, Wilson and O'Hara, slightly wounded.

Wyse's Company.—Private Allen, mortally wounded, and five privates slightly wounded.

Non-Commissioned Staff.—Principal musician Rose, missing.

Louisiana Volunteers.—Lieutenant Heimberger, severely wounded; G. Schmidt, G. Colson, G. Zeller, John Brown and L. Scott, killed; L. Durnan, mortally wounded; L. Davis and L. Lambino, missing;—Ogg, slightly wounded.

Having no surgeon or means of transportation, Lieutenant Toneyhill and two privates, all mortally wounded, with a man as nurse, were left at the house of the alcalde in Tantayuka, with a letter to that functionary, demanding for these unfortunate men the common rights of humanity; and also in the conversation with the bearers of

General Garay's flag the disposal made of these wounded was mentioned, and it was promised they should be cared for.

For the conduct of every man composing my command, I have praise to bestow. There were instances, however, of extraordinary gallantry. Captain Wyse during the engagement at Calaboso river, acted with that steady courage and gallantry, constituting the highest grade of military character, being constantly under the direct fire of the enemy. His indefatigable services and endurance, during the two subsequent days of skirmishing by day and watching by night, are also gratefully remembered by me, and entitle him to our highest commendation.

Captains Mace and Seguire, of the Louisiana regiment of volunteers, are brave men, and excellent soldiers.—They charged the enemy most gallantly at the river engagement, and in entering Tantayuka. Their exertions and services were constant and untiring, from the morning of the 12th until the night of the 14th. Lieutenant Toneyhill may possibly survive his wound. It is but justice to say, that his conduct was admirable, and deserving the highest compliments. Lieutenant Heimberger is also entitled to my most complimentary notice. After being severely wounded, and suffering with consequent fever, he did not hesitate to report for duty when the enemy appeared, and when it was thought hard fighting was our only resource. Lieutenants Lindenberger and Campbell acted with gallantry and zeal whenever an opportunity presented. Mr. Aldridge, who as proprietor of the mules engaged as packs, was with us, rendered most essential and gallant service, being forward and active in every charge made upon the enemy. Mr. Lafler, one of the Tampico Rangers, rendered very important service in coming with the express to Tampico by night, when I thought myself so surrounded as to be in the greatest doubts whether there was any possibility of escape without succor. Mr. Pemberton, a gentleman who accompanied us as an amateur, also rendered essential and gallant services. The small detachment of Tampico Rangers, armed as they were merely as cavalry, could not be so advantageously employed as the other troops; they were, however, generally ready and willing to discharge such duties as they were called on for.

Among the non-commissioned officers of my command, I have to

notice the acting Sergeant-Major Singleton, of the Louisiana regiment, who on several occasions distinguished himself as a brave and gallant soldier ; he had a horse shot under him.

Another was the sergeant in charge of Captain Wyse's gun, who with as gallant a gun squad as ever served a piece, bore the brunt of the action on the river bank. The names of these brave men have escaped my memory. I will procure and hand them to you.

There were also Sergeants Moore, Woodey and Townsend, of the Louisiana regiment, all of whom are entitled to honorable mention.

I have omitted to state the force of the enemy engaged against us, and the probable number of their loss. Their strength must have been near fifteen hundred. And although we were not actually engaged at any one time against their whole force, yet we were compelled to meet them all in turn. I have learned from Mexican men, who saw the battle ground at Calaboso, just before the engagement, that there were three hundred within the ambuscades upon this side the river, and five hundred upon the opposite bank, commanded by General Garay himself ; and there was probably as many more upon our flanks and rear the following days, while in retreat. Their loss is estimated at two hundred, as well from statements of their own people, as from what we saw.

In closing this report, which I fear may already be too long, I must beg to remark that for our return we are indebted chiefly to the field-piece taken out by Captain Wyse's company, and so well managed by that excellent officer and his brave men. It is an arm, as yet but insufficiently appreciated, but of which the vast importance and usefulness must be developed by experience. In any expedition such as that from which I have just returned, I estimate one field-piece, well supplied and well managed, as equivalent to one hundred muskets, and perhaps more in defence.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

L. G. DE RUSSY, Col. La. Reg. Volunteers.

To Col. WILLIAM GATES, Commanding Department Tampico.

Documents found on the Battle Field of Buena Vista.

(Originally published in the Troy Whig.)

We feel assured that we cannot do a more acceptable service to our readers, than to present them with the following highly interesting documents. We are kindly permitted this privilege by the family of our gallant townsman, General Wool. It will be seen by the certificates to each, that the originals were found in manuscript on the battle field of Buena Vista, during the sanguinary and decisive struggle of the 23d of February last, and were among the trophies of that glorious day. They have been literally translated from the Spanish by Captain Davis, assistant quartermaster general, attached to General Wool's staff, and have never before been published. To us they have a peculiar interest, as contributing more than anything hitherto from the press has done, to a knowledge of the true character of the Mexican army, and its distinguished commander, against which our indomitable and victorious band of less than one-fourth its number, had to contend.

That army has not been fully understood, and its prowess too lightly regarded. It was composed of the flower of the Mexican forces, had been long and carefully drilled under the personal inspection of the President General, and was in all respects better provided and equipped, and more perfectly prepared, than any that country has before furnished. These documents show General Santa Anna to be of a much higher order of military science and skill, than our fellow-citizens generally accorded to him. That he has had great experience, we all know. The physical courage and bravery of the Mexican troops cannot be doubted, whatever may be said of their General-in-chief, in this respect. This army was officered by the *elite* of the Mexican nation, and embraced, as it will be seen, twenty-four general officers.

When we consider the vast odds against which our brave countrymen had to contend, the immense loss in killed and wounded to which they were subjected, the result seems little less than marvellous.—To have saved themselves from utter annihilation, under all circumstances, would have covered our arms with glory. But when we look at its results, and see that though the Mexican

army was not captured, yet that it was effectually dispersed, and in a great measure disbanded; that the Mexican power was entirely subdued, and the undisputed possession of her northern provinces secured to our arms, the recital must cause the bosom of every American to glow with patriot pride. History nowhere records a harder fought battle, nor a more brilliant victory. Hereafter the highest aspirations of military fame will be fulfilled when it shall be said of any fellow-citizen, *he was at Buena Vista*.

The following proclamation was issued on the 28th January, 1847, and ordered to be read at the head of each regiment, and a copy was ordered to be printed for the use of each company.

His Excellency, the General-in-chief of the Army of Operations of the North, to all under his command:—

Companions in Arms! The operations of the enemy require of us to move precipitately on their principal line—and we are about to do it. The independence, the honor, and destinies of the nation depend in this movement on your decision. Soldiers! the entire world is observing us, and it is obligatory on you, that your deeds should be as heroic as they are necessary, from the neglect and abandonment with which you have been treated by those whose duty it is to succor you—privations of all kinds await you. But when has want or penury weakened your spirit or debilitated enthusiasm? The Mexican soldier is well known for his frugality, and for his capability of sufferance; never does he need magazines of provisions, when about to pass the deserts; but he has always had an eye to the resources and supplies of his enemy, to minister to his own wants.

To-day you commence your march through a thinly settled country, without supplies and without provisions; but you may be assured that very quickly you will be in possession of those of your enemy, and of their riches, and with them all your wants will be superabundantly remedied.

My friends, we are about to open the campaign; and who can tell us how many days of glory await us. What a perspective! So full of hope for our country. What satisfaction will you feel when you contemplate you have saved our independence, that you are the object of admiration to the whole world, and that our country will

shower down blessings on your heads. Oh! when again in the bosoms of your families, you shall relate your dangers, and hardships suffered, your combats and triumphs over your daring presumptuous foe. When you tell your children that *you* have given them their country the second time, your jubilee will be complete, and how insignificant will your sacrifices appear.

Soldiers! trust confidingly in the destiny of our country—the cause we sustain is holy! Never have we gone to the conflict with so much justice—for we are defending the home of our forefathers and of our posterity, our honor, our holy religion, our wives, our children! What sacrifice is too great for objects so dear? Let our motto be “to conquer or to die.” Let us swear before the Eternal that you will not rest one instant until we completely wipe away from our soil the vain-glorious foreigner, who has dared to pollute it with his presence. No terms with him—nothing for us but heroism and grandeur.

Head-quarters, in San Luis Potosi, Jan. 27th, 1847.

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

By order of his Excellency.

MICHELTORENA.

The following is a correct list of Generals in the field:—

Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, President, General-in-Chief; Don Manuel Alvarez, General-in-Chief of all the Cavalry; Lombardini, Commander-in-Chief of Infantry; Don Antonio Requena, Commander-in-Chief of Artillery; Ignacio Mora, General-in-Chief of Engineers; Micheltorena, Chief of the General Staff; Vasquez, Minon, (detached,) Mejia, Torrejon, Jaurequi, Don Nicholas Flores, Ampudia, Rafael Pacheco, Perez, Juvera, Jose NaGarcia, Mora, Quintamar, Ortega, Manuel Romero.

GENERAL ORDERS, January 28th, 1847.

Officer in Chief of the Day:—Lieutenant-Colonel DON MANUEL ROMERO.
Head-quarters, First Brigade.

ORDER OF MARCH OF THE ARMY.

By general order, the General-in-Chief commands that the baggage shall not be carried with the army; nor shall the soldiers take their knapsacks, but shall wear their dress of Russia duck, and

over their suit of cloth ; they shall only take two shirts, four rounds of cartridges and two flints, including the one in the guns ; they shall carry nothing except their cooking utensils. All the officers, and other persons, shall march in their places, and when bivouacking, shall sleep at the heads of their respective commands.

On Thursday, the 28th, the fifth brigade of infantry under the command of Don Francisco Pacheco, will commence its march, sending ahead always the evening previous an officer to procure lodgings and preparations for the troops.

On Friday, 29th, the first and second brigades will march out in the same manner, under the orders of Rafael Don Garcia Conde. These brigades will be considered as united until further orders, and consequently all the infantry is placed under the command of General-of-Brigade, Don Manuel Maria Lombardini.

On Saturday, 30th, the fourth and sixth brigades will march in like manner under the command of Brigadier-General Don Luis Guzman.

On the 27th the following pieces of artillery will march :— Three 24s, three 16s, five 12s, and eight 8 pounders, and one howitzer, with ammunition corresponding to each, and also the platforms for the large pieces, 500 boxes of musket ammunition, 12,000 flints, and two remainder of the canister and grape of the three pieces, which were in Tula—all of which will be placed in the twenty-one wagons contracted for ; and what remains on 450 mules, which the chief of the staff will order to be delivered to the commanding officer of artillery. The ammunition of the pieces above expressed will be escorted by themselves and by the company of sappers and miners who belong to the regiment of engineers ; and by the artillerymen of the light brigade, who will take with them all the implements necessary for sapping and mining, in the wagons which the sappers have ; the jacks for filling with earth will be carried on mules, which will be furnished by the chief of the staff.

The medical staff having left, in the hospital of the city, four junior surgeons, and only the necessaries for their service, all the rest will march, apportioned among the different brigades under the orders of the medical inspector general, with all their medicines and articles necessary for the campaign.

The general's staff and its chief will depart after having advanced all the brigades and material of war—taking particular care that after arriving at Matagula, the staff will be distributed to each division according to the necessities of the service.

All the military left in the city, will know as their commander-in-chief, the General-of-Brigade Don Juan Arandox, under whose command are the fortifications, instruction, and discipline of the troops, and likewise the defence of the city and state; he being commanding general.

There will remain in this city only those soldiers who are incapable of doing service in the campaign; and on the morning of the 26th, they, all the new recruits, the sick, the weak and unarmed, will be marched in and take possession of the different barracks, for it is the desire of the President General-in-Chief, that only those soldiers should march who are capable of performing the duties, and bearing the fatigues and privations of war.

Each brigade will leave in this city persons capable of instructing their recruits, and for the defence of the place; at least one captain and subalterns in proportion to their respective members.

The General-in-Chief, Don Manuel M. Lombardini, will order that by 12 o'clock, A. M., to-morrow, a list be made and delivered to the chief of the staff, of all the baggage to be transported belonging to each and every corps. The artillery, engineer, quartermaster, and medical staff will also comply with this order.

The chief of the staff will remit to each chief of section, instructions necessary for the march.

Every officer belonging to this army, whatever may be his rank or title, will read to the troops under his command the following order:

1st. Any person who shall desert his flag shall suffer death, agreeably to article 57th, of the 29th December, 1838.

2d. Any person who may be found a half league distant from this city, or from the camp, wherever it may be, shall be considered guilty of the crime of desertion.

By order of his Excellency.

SALAZON CORONAL VASQUEZ,
General Brigade.

GENERAL ORDERS of the 20th to 21st February, 1847.

General Officer of the day, Don Rafael Vasquez ; Aids of the day
Colonel Jose M'a Bermudes, Lieut. Col. Don Francisco Aspeitia.
For to-morrow —Don Francisco Meji, General Officer of the day ;
Colonel Don Carlos Brito, and Lieutenant-Colonel Don Gregorio
Elate—Aids.

In the morning the army will continue its march, which will commence at eleven o'clock precisely, in the following order :

The first, second, third and fourth battalions of light infantry will take the lead under the orders of General Ampudia, so that he may be able to avail himself of all advantages that the circumstances may require. Immediately after, the battalion of Sappers, and in its rear, and at the head of the division of infantry of the van, under the orders of General Pacheco, will be placed the company of Sharp Shooters, and three pieces of "sixteens," with their respective artillerists and reserve, as likewise the ammunition, composed of one hundred round shot, one hundred grape for each piece, and eighty boxes of musket ammunition, each containing 9,600 cartridges. Division of infantry of the centre, commanded by General Manuel M'n Lombardini, will follow ; at the head of this column there will be five "twelves," manned and ammunitioned as above, and also eighty boxes of musket ammunition. At the head of the division of the rear, commanded by General Ortejo, there will be five pieces of eights, supplied with men and ammunitioned as above, and also eighty boxes of musket ammunition, containing each 9,600 cartridges. The division of cavalry of the rear, will follow closely on the last of infantry, having at their head the "Hussars," and in the rear, the general ammunition train escorted by the brigade of horse artillery. After the ammunition train, all the camp followers of all classes, with the baggage of all kinds, laundresses, cooks, &c., it being distinctly understood that no women will be allowed to mix with the column. The chief of the com'g department is Don Pedro Ranjel, who is also in charge of the baggage train.

His Excellency the General-in-chief, furthermore orders, that the different corps shall to-day receive from the commissary three days' rations for the 21st, 22d and 23d, and that they receive the necessary

meat this afternoon for the first meal to-morrow morning, which the troops are directed to eat one hour before taking up the line of march, and the second will be taken in their haversacks to be eaten in the night wherever they may halt ; this last will consist of meat, two biscuits, and a half of a cake of (piloncello) brown sugar for a man, for on the night the 21st, there will be no fires permitted, neither will signal be made by any military instrument of music, the movement at early daybreak on the morning of the 23d, having to be made in the most profound silence.

The troops will drink all the water they can before marching, and will take with them in their canteens or other vessels, all they can possibly carry, and they will economize the water all they can, for we shall encamp at night without water, and shall not arrive at it until twelve o'clock on the following day.

The chief of corps will pay *much, much* attention to this last instruction.

Each mule belonging to the ammunition train, and the horses of officers, will receive two rations of corn, which they will take with them, and these will be fed to them to-morrow night at dusk and the following morning at daybreak. The horses' girths will only be slackened, and the mules will not be unharnessed, while they are eating. The light brigade will likewise obey this order on the night of the 21st, only loosening their saddles a little. The horses and mules will be taken to water before commencing the march.

Each division will take with it its respective medical staff, hospital attendants, medicines, &c., regulated by the Medical Inspector-General.

The Chaplain-in-chief will provide each division with its chaplain. He will also, as to-morrow is a feast day, order mass to be said at six o'clock in front of the position occupied by the vanguards, at seven o'clock in front of the centre, at eight o'clock in front of the rear guards, and at nine o'clock in front of the division of cavalry.

General Don Francisco Perez is ordered to be recognized as second in command to General Lombardini, and General Don Guzman as second to General Ortejo.

To facilitate the duties of the Conductor-General of the baggage

train, the cavalry of Celaya, and Presidial troops, are hereby placed under his command.

His excellency, the General-in-chief, recommends to every officer punctual compliance with, and obedience to every part of this, his general order. By order of his excellency,

MANUEL MICHELTORENA,
Chief of the General Staff.

Discharges from the Army.

The following letter which appears in the newspapers, may or may not be genuine; but it certainly contains a happy and caustic reproof of the practice, now so prevalent, of soliciting discharges from the army.

“The following letter *is said* to have been written by General Scott to the Honorable Millard Filmore:”

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY.

MY DEAR SIR:—I have received the two letters (one from the Rev. Mr. Angier, and the other signed by Mr. Van Wyck) asking, on several grounds, the discharge of James Thompson, a private of the second regiment of artillery. 1st—He has since his enlistment, reformed his habits. This is an argument in favor of his serving out his time, lest he should relapse, if discharged, before confirmed in his reformation—military discipline highly favors reformation. 2d—He has become pious. This makes him at once a better soldier and a better man, and fortunately we are not without many pious officers and men in our ranks; but 3d—it is alleged that he has imbibed conscientious scruples against performing military duty.—If the man be mad he can be discharged on a surgeon's certificate to that effect—but if he has only turned coward, we have ample means of punishing him if he should, when ordered, refuse to fight.

I return the letters you enclosed, and remain,

My dear sir, with great esteem, yours truly,

WINFIELD SCOTT.

Hon. M. FILMORE.

General Wool's March.

We copy below, from the Taunton (Mass.) Whig of the 22d *inst.*, a paragraph from an eloquent article in that paper, descriptive of the march of General Wool from San Antonio de Bexar to Lake Parras, and thence to Agua Neuva, a distance of nearly one thousand miles. The circumstances connected with this march, stamped General Wool as one of the best disciplinarians of the age, and the manner in which he manœuvred the men whom he had so suddenly transformed from civilians into soldiers, on the plateau of Buena Vista, proved him to be as thoroughly versed in the combinations of the battle-field, as in the minutiae of the drill. On the 29th of September, 1846, he commenced his march from San Antonio with the advance column of his hasty levies ; and on the 22d of February, only five months thereafter, they were brought into action under his own eye, and behaved with a steady courage which the old Imperial Guard of Napoleon could never have surpassed. When it is considered that of these five months nearly three were consumed in a rapid and toilsome progress through an enemy's country, the military instruction which General Wool contrived to impart to his troops in that brief interval, cannot fail to excite both wonder and admiration. It has been recommended by some of our veteran officers, that the "Camp of Instruction," should be organized for the purpose of drilling the raw recruits, before sending them to the seat of war. General Wool's command was a moving camp of instruction from the day he took up his line of march at San Antonio, to the day he bivouacked on the shore of Lake Parras.

General Wool had accomplished a march of nine hundred miles through the heart of an enemy's country, without firing a gun or shedding a drop of blood. He had levelled hills, filled ravines, constructed bridges, led his army over sandy plains, scaled mountains, and brought them to his extreme post in high health, scarcely losing one man on the march ; the whole "as full of spirit as the month of May," and although consisting principally of volunteers, in a state of discipline so admirable, that it was the wonder of all military men, the column was itself, so thorough in all its appointments, that it was the model of an army : in want of nothing, and able to keep the field a year.—The General had accomplished his object by consummate

address, and a system of admirable military diplomacy. He had restrained all plundering, spared the Mexicans, and fed his own army with their provisions, which were readily supplied at reasonable prices, because they were confident that they would be honorably dealt with and punctually paid.

The annals of history furnish no instance of a march like this ; it is not surpassed by the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks under Xenophon, for the Greeks were retreating, the Americans advancing. No disasters occurred, nothing was lost, the supplies of provisions and the *materiel* of war were ample, and the fine condition, both as to discipline and health, in which the soldiers were found at the termination of this stupendous march—all utter the consummate military ability of the commander.

General Wool soon took post at Buena Vista, and when General Taylor arrived, he placed him in command of all the forces near Saltillo, reserving under his immediate command a small body at Saltillo. Vera Cruz soon became the principal object, and it was there the military and naval enterprise of America was to be tested. General Scott “regretted that the necessities of the service required” all Taylor’s regulars, and the best of his volunteers, for the operations against Vera Cruz, and that he was compelled to reduce him to a state of inactivity. General Worth was ordered to the coast. General Butler left the army on sick leave and went to Washington. Taylor and Wool were the only generals left. Shut up in the mountains and in garrison, the two veterans would be permitted to hear the echoes of the din of war, and to give salutes to celebrate General Scott’s victories. But,

“There is a destiny which shapes our ends,
Rough hew them as we will.”

The little army amongst the mountains, were compelled to meet in pitched battle, the grand army of Mexico, led by Santa Anna, the principal general and President of the Republic, in person, and a victory was gained unparalleled in the annals of America, and which will be

———“In story and in song
For many an age remembered long.”

The echo of victory *descended* from the mountains to the sea ; it is

more appalling than cannon, shells and Paixhan guns—an ocean fleet and “an army with banners.” In five days the principal commercial city of Mexico, and the Gibraltar of America were surrendered. The eagle of the mountains had strangled the serpent of Aztec.

General Taylor's Politics.

The political position of General Taylor, seems to be very clearly defined in the following letters lately published in the *Clinton Floridian*. It is addressed to a Democrat :

CAMP NEAR MONTEREY, MEXICO,
June 9th, 1847.

DEAR SIR :—Your letter of the 15th ult., from Clinton, Louisiana, has just reached, in which you are pleased to say, “the signs of the times in relation to the next Presidency, and the prominent position of your name in connexion with it, is a sufficient excuse for this letter.”—That “it is a happy feature in our government that official functionaries under it, from the lowest to the highest station, are not beyond the reach and partial supervision of the humblest citizen, and that it is a right in every freeman to possess himself of the political principles and opinions of those into whose hands the administration of the government may be placed,” &c., to all of which I fully coincide with you in opinion.—Asking my views on several subjects—“1st, as to the justice and necessity of this war with Mexico, on our part ; 2d, as to the necessity of a national bank, and the power of Congress for creating such an institution ; 3d, as to the effects of a high protective tariff, and the right of Congress under the Constitution, to create such a system of revenue.”

As regards the first interrogatory, with my duties and the position I occupy, I do not consider it would be proper in me to give any opinion in regard to the same ; as a citizen, and particularly as a soldier, it is sufficient for me to know that our country is at war with a foreign nation, to do all in my power to bring it to a speedy and honorable termination, by the most vigorous and energetic operations, without inquiring about its justice or anything else

connected with it ; believing as I do, it is our wisest policy to be at peace with all the world, as long as it can be done without endangering the honor and interests of the country.

As regards the second and third inquiries, I am not prepared to answer them ; I could only do so after investigating those subjects, which I cannot now do ; my whole time being fully occupied in attending to my proper official duties, which must not be neglected under any circumstances ; and I must say to you in substance what I have said to others in regard to similar matters, that I am no politician. Near forty years of my life have been passed in the public service, in the army, most of which was in the field, the camp, on our western frontier, or in the Indian country ; and for nearly the two last in this or Texas, during which time I have not passed one night under the roof of a house.

As regards being a candidate for the Presidency at the coming election, I have no aspirations in that way, and regret that the subject has been agitated at this early day, and that it had not been deferred until the close of this war, or until the end of the next session of Congress, especially if I am to be mixed up with it, as it is possible it may lead to the injury of the public service in this quarter, by my operations being embarrassed, as well as produce much excitement in the country growing out of the discussion of the merits, &c., of the different aspirants for that high office, which might have been very much allayed, if not prevented, had the subject been deferred as suggested ; besides, very many changes may take place between now and 1848, so much so, as to make it desirable for the interest of the country, that some other individual than myself, better qualified for the situation, should be selected ; and could he be elected, I would not only acquiesce in such an arrangement, but would rejoice that the republic had one citizen, and no doubt there are thousands, more deserving than I am, and better qualified to discharge the duties of said office.

If I have been named by others, and considered a candidate for the Presidency, it has been by no agency of mine in the matter—and if the good people think my services important in that station, and elect me, I will feel bound to serve them, and all the pledges and explanations I can enter into and make, as regards this or that policy,

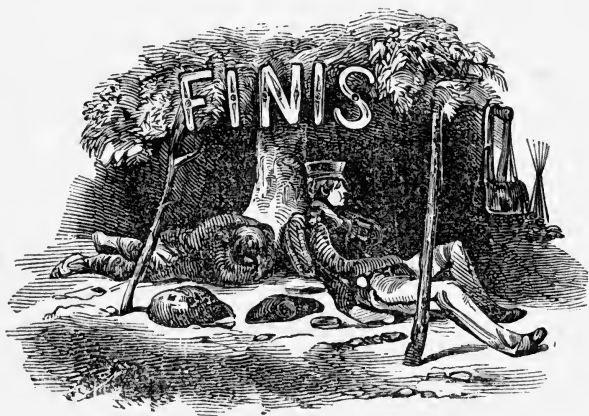
is, that I will do so honestly and faithfully to the best of my abilities, strictly in compliance with the constitution. Should I ever occupy the White House, it must be by the spontaneous move of the people, and by no act of mine, so that I could go into the office untrammelled, and be the chief magistrate of the nation and not of a party.

But should they, the people, change their views and opinions between this and the time of holding the election, and cast their votes for the Presidency for some one else, I will not complain. With considerations of respect, I remain, your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR.

Mr. EDWARD DELUNY.

P. S.—I write in great haste, and under constant interruption.



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